
interlitteraria

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Introductory Note

In my last "Introductory Note" for *Interlitteraria*, written a year ago, I mentioned how important for us, the Estonian comparatists, was the support we had always felt, since we joined in 1994 the ICLA, on the part of its leading international scholars. In particular, I referred to a handwritten letter by the ICLA President Tania Franco Carvalhal, which was brought by Dorothy Figueira and Eduardo Coutinho to our 6th international conference, in September 2005, and which I read in public at the opening of the event.

Tania Franco Carvalhal is no longer among us. In September, 2006, we received from the ICLA the deeply grieving news about her passing away. I wish the present edition of *Interlitteraria* could be a dedication to her memory.

I met Tania for the first time at an international colloquium in Odense, in 1996. After the colloquium had ended, before I returned to Estonia and she to Porto Alegre, we happened to meet by chance near a church in the old town, and as we walked together, we talked about comparative studies in our respective countries, our plans and aspirations.

Since then, I knew Tania as an exceptionally cordial person who despite chairing the huge Brazilian association of comparatists, belonging to the ICLA organizational elite and, finally, being elected its President, never abandoned her simple, modest and immediate manner of treating people. So she got along well with everybody, serving as an example of how the spirit of dialogue and understanding the "other", so characteristic of Tania's scholarly research (cf e. g. her article in *Interlitteraria* 8, 2003: "Le propre et l'etranger dans le parcours littéraire latino-americain"), could wonderfully work in life. Or vice versa.

I would like to remember here also another person, whose death should make us think about the sense of our activity within the narrow frames of our earthy existence. I refer to Haljand Udam, one of the greatest orientalists Estonia has had. Born in 1936, he unexpectedly left us in December, 2005. He was not really a member

of our association, but his activities ran in parallel to it, as we cooperated, especially at a major task to write a first Estonian comprehensive monograph of world literature. The book has not appeared yet, but the manuscript is in the publishing process. Haljand Udam wrote for the book extensive overviews on Indian, Iranian, Arabian and Turkish literature. No other Estonian scholar could have done it but he nor would be able to do it in the foreseeable future.

We will be lucky to have the book, but it should also make us think of the tasks of a genuine intellectual in his/her native culture. People like Udam, seriously and philosophically devoted to their cultural mission, are among those who really discover for us the "other". They do not have time to move in the fashionable trends and construct such "orientalisms" which in reality have little to do with Oriental peoples and their culture.

I sincerely hope the 21st century would witness to the appearance of young scholars who, following in the footsteps of Tania Franco Carvalhal and Haljand Udam, have courage enough to abandon the intellectual vanity and empty sophisticated talk, so wide-spread in the second half of 20th century, to deal with the tasks and face the challenges arising from the immediate cultural reality of their native countries, to make the world less exclusive, less superficial and more understanding.

In the present *miscellanea*-issue of *Interlitteraria* we once again publish a long series of essays by young talented scholars, whose vision necessarily complements the view of researchers like myself, still deeply rooted in the 20th century, the era of our formation. I am convinced, however, that in the same way as there are points of intersection between the essay on *rasa* by the experienced and merited colleague from Bengalia, Mohit K. Ray, and the vision by the young Estonian scholar and writer Lauri Pilter on the comic and tragicomic in William Faulkner, intersecting ideas, proving similarities between mental currents, notwithstanding the age and the origin of a researcher, can be found in all areas and topics involved in this issue of *Interlitteraria*.

At the same time it is a great satisfaction to see that *Interlitteraria* is gradually becoming a forum for an academic discussion in

which polemical notes are not avoided nor smoothed. I think it is good for *Interlitteraria*. It is a proof of its vitality.

A number of articles in the present *Interlitteraria* center on analyzing the town and its relatedness to modernity. These are some of the fruits of an international seminar held at Kiel University at the start of December, 2006. We are thankful to the main organizer of the seminar, the Chair of Spanish and French literature of Kiel University, Dr. Javier Gómez-Montero who kindly invited me with a group of Estonian doctoral students to attend the seminar and, thus, provided inspiration for essays on these lines.

My colleagues abroad and their students often ask me how they could subscribe to *Interlitteraria*, to receive it regularly. There is not really a ready answer to it. As in Estonia itself the reading public of *Interlitteraria*, published exclusively in other languages than our native Estonian, is not large at all, Tartu University Press, naturally, cannot take the risk to have big print runs. For that reason, some of the numbers have by now been definitely sold out (thus, No 4, No 10) and cannot be found anywhere.

The only comfort is that Tartu University's library traditionally sends *Interlitteraria*, by way of exchange, to nearly eighty university libraries of the world. To add, since 2005, all issues of *Interlitteraria* can be read at the Central and Eastern Europe Online Library (http://www.ceeol.com), based in Frankfurt am Main.

The next issue of *Interlitteraria* (13, 2008) will gather the papers of our 7th international conference, centering on the fate of great cultural and literary myths in modern times. The manuscripts should arrive by the end of January, 2008.

Jüri Talvet,
Editor

Rasa and Pleasure

MOHIT K. RAY

Any definition of poetry according to Indian poetics must take into account three things. How does poetry differ from other forms of expression? What is the purpose of poetry? What is the effect of poetry? It is in the third question that the idea of aesthetic pleasure is implied. The word that, according to Abhinavagupta, sums up the entire body of critical literature is *Rasa*. Throughout *Nāṭyaśāstra* Bharata subordinates other elements in the drama to *Rasa* and write: "Without *Rasa* no dramatic device is of any importance What is essential to poetry is the creation of beauty. The only dispute is about the name: whether we will call it *cārutvapratīti* or *dhvani.* Abhinavagupta calls attention to the difference between 'suggestion' and other unusual uses of language, and it is a difference, which is concerned with the very essence of a poem. Abhinavagupta means that suggestion, if given its proper scope can carry us deeper and deeper into poem, but if hindered by other considerations it lapses into an intellectual function only. It, in that case, would bring one to the brink of a true aesthetic experience but on account of lack of beauty in the original would frustrate the possibilities of its fullest realization. Thus one of the great criteria for poetry is the subjective perception of artistic beauty. Abhinavagupta makes it clear when he insists that the fact that *rasa* is not something certain (*niyata*). Masson and Patwawardhan point out that Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta "make the important point that the conditions for understanding direct utterances are less complex than those required for understanding suggestive utterances. They explain that once we are taught the lexical meaning of a given word, its denotative scope is fixed (*niyata*), for convention which lies at the root of denotation is limited" (Masson 1970: 17). The suggested meaning, however is

completely unfixed (*anitya*), since it depends on intangibles like the cultural level of a reader, the immediate context in which the utterances are made, the situation depicted, the nature of the person etc. Ānandavardhana insists that a mere knowledge of the lexical meanings of words is not sufficient for understanding their hidden suggestions. This idea leads to the introduction of a whole new vocabulary.

Abhinavagupta says: "In literature the aesthetic relish through the verbal paraphernalia is like the blossoming of a magic flower; it is essentially a thing of the present moment which does not depend on past or future time' (ib. 18). It is like what James Joyce would call epiphany; a sudden revelation. It is generally believed that Ānandavardhana uses the word *camatkāra* for the first time. Afterwards it becomes a part of the common critical parlance. Visvanatha sums up the position thus: "The essence of *rasa* is aesthetic delight (*camatkāra*) and it is found in all *rasas*". Abhinavagupta holds like Aristotle that the goal of poetry is delight and he reminds one of Horace when he further implies that this delight leads to intellectual refinement. But it may be pointed out here that both these goals – delight and instruction – *dulce* and *utile* of Horace can be traced back to Bharata who in the first chapter of *Nāṭyaśāstra* tells us the story of the birth of poetry when the gods approach Brahma and tell him: "We want something to amuse us. Something we can see and listen to at the same time. Brahma agrees to create drama and says: "Since these Vedas cannot be heard by women and sudras and other lower classes, I will create a fifth Veda, different from these, that will be for all people. I will create a fifth Veda called drama out of past stories that will lead to righteousness, to material gain, to fame, with good advice and full of wise sayings". (Ib. 19). Bharata also says that the drama is *vinodakaraṇa* (entertaining). Then Brahma writes a drama about Siva, and when Siva witnesses the play he says, "This play reminds me of the dance I dance at sunset. With its many movements of the limbs and varied kinds it is most lovely. Use it in your *Pūrvaraṅga*." When asked by the sages about the relevance of a dance, because it has apparently no meaning, Bharata gives a magnificent reply that at once looks forward to the theory of art for art's sake of Theophile Gautier. Bharata says, "Dance does not require any

meaning. It has been created for the simple reason that it is beautiful'. Abhinavagupta is conscious of the fact that literature has no goal other than delight. In this respect his affinity with Aristotle is obvious. This becomes abundantly clear when he says that Siva is one of the deities of the drama because the dance he performs at sunset is a manifestation of ecstasy without any purpose. Abhinavagupta also anticipates postmodernism in a way when he says that in drama one can show the full moon several times because drama is not concerned with the phenomenal reality. In other words poetry has no extra-territorial loyalty. When, again in *Nāṭyaśāstra* Bharata compares the reader to a gourmet and calls him *sumanas*, the word eventually leads to the word, *sahṛday*, and thereby anticipates the Reader-Response theory. The reader must be in sympathy with the characters. If a character is depressed, the reader also should feel depressed. It is this idea that possibly makes Abhinavagupta coin the word, *hṛdayasamvāda.*

Abhinavagupta has also something to say about propriety. When he says that depiction of lovemaking of two divinities who are regarded as the primal parents of the universe is improper he means that what obstructs the delight of those who experience *rasa*, is lack of propriety. Incidentally Milton tackled the problem with great difficulty in *Paradise Lost* Book IV, and that, too, not very satisfactorily.

Like Coleridge's organic aestheticism Abhinavagupta also believes that artificiality of any kind in a poem must be avoided. If a poem tries to impress us only by verbal tricks, by virtue of rhymes, alliterations etc. or the handling of the meter, so to speak, it cannot produce *rasa* or aesthetic relish. One remembers Coleridge's famous distinction in *Biographia Literaria* between a legitimate poem and a poem which has only the shape of a poem, which is only a metrical composition, and therefore cannot be considered a legitimate poem. Abhinavagupta is at one with Coleridge that every element in a poem must be integral to the poem. Every element must contribute to the totality of a poem. Only then it can produce aesthetic relish. Thus when Abhinavagupta says that just delightful handling of meters cannot make poetry the affinity between Abhinavagupta and Coleridge becomes obvious. There are people, Abhinavagupta says, who

are incapable of appreciating the beauty of poetry for lack of imagination. It is a view that Pope would also endorse. According to him there are people who lack imagination, but blindly follow convention. One may also find affinity with Wordsworth's theory of poetry as "a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" taking its origin in "emotion recollected in tranquillity". According to Abhinavagupta although poetry bubbles up to the poet gifted with imagination spontaneously, nonetheless by reflecting on it in detail and thinking about how he should modify it that he makes the poetry come into being. This is exactly what Wordsworth means by "emotion recollected in tranquillity". The immediate emotion is not captured in poetry; only after a period of gestation and recrudescence the poetry comes into being as a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings".

It is now well-established critical opinion that the key word of all Sanskrit literature is *Rasa*. According to this theory as propounded by Bharata in *Nāṭyaśāstra* the *vibhāvas* (sources) belong to the characters represented on the stage, and there is no limit to the number of *vivhāvas*. In the case of *Abhijnānaśakuntalam* the *alambana vibhāvas* or primary sources are Śakuntalā and Dushyanta. The physical beauty of both characters, the spring flowers, the bees etc. constitute the *uddipanavibhāvas* or the setting. The *anubhāvas* which form parts of *śśttikabhāvas* refer to the characters and, according to Bharata, the physical manifestations of love. The *anubhāvas* are realized through actions and behaviour of the characters. Since actions are louder than words the actions reveal a character better than the words used by a character. In this respect the *anubhāvas* are what Eliot would call 'objective correlative' in his famous essay, "Hamlet and His Problems". The three most problematic elements in the poetics of drama are: *vyābhicāribhāvas* or *saňcāribhāvas*, the *sthāyībh bhāvas* and finally *rasa* itself. Although Bharata lists thirty-three of these *vyābhicāribhāvas* he makes it clear in the seventh *adhyāy* that this number is not actually exhaustive; there may be many *vyābhicāribhāvas* other than the thirty-three enumerated. The *vyābhicāribhāvas* are emotions that accompany the primary feelings of the character, but they are not inherent to the character's personality, although at the time of action they belong

exclusively to the character. An example will make it clear. Dushyanta's longing for a union with Sakuntala is not shared by the audience, although the audience would in all probability endorse this longing. So, though both *saňcāribhāvas* and *sthāyībhāvas* deal with emotions one is exclusively confined to the character while the other, that is the *sthāyībhāvas* is shared by the audience. *Sthāyībhāvas* is a state of mind, which on account of being deeply felt dominates all other emotions. It is shared by both the character and the audience. When a character experiences a *sthāyībhāvas* he has experienced a height of emotion, say the emotion of love but the spectators do not fall in love with Sita.

Once the *sthāyībhāvas rati* is transformed into an otherworldly state or *alaukikāvasthā rasa* is achieved. The reader or the spectator, the *sahṛdaya* is then in sympathy with the character. This is described as *hṛdayasamvāda* that enables the spectator to even identify with the situation depicted. But what is supremely important is that he never identifies completely, he cannot and should not in fact, completely identify with the character. He maintains an aesthetic distance, and this enables him to enjoy *rasa*.' The idea of *rasa* involves an idea of distance. The very existence of literature depends on aesthetic distance. It is worth recalling in this connection Abhinavagupta's famous comparison of drama to a dream. In drama, as in dream, nothing in the real world is affected. It would be as absurd for a spectator to fall in love with a character, as it would be absurd to expect the golden ladybug of a dream to be still shining in our hand in the morning. This reminds us one of Eliot's *obiter dicta* that the distinction between art emotion and life emotion is absolute.

It may be pointed out here that although there has been a series of debates about the importance of *dhvani* as propounded by Ānanda-vardhana there has never been any dispute about the importance of *rasa* in poetry. In fact, if looked closely it would be also evident that for Ānanadavardhana also there is no real dispute between the relative importance of *dhvani* or *rasa*. Strictly speaking Ānanda-vardhana states very clearly in *Dhvanyāloka* that the whole point of his treatise on *dhvani* is to establish the importance of *dhvani* in the creation of *rasa*.

It is not the intention of Ānandavardhana to plead for the priority of one school over another but just to establish that it is *dhvani* or *rasadhvani*, to be more precise that helps in creating *rasa*. Ānandavardhana is the first author to give supreme importance to *rasa* as the *poesis* of a poem. *Rasa* is the greatest contribution of India to the theory of literature. Aristotle says in *Poetics* that the end of poetry is pleasure, but he does not – or at least the *Poetics* as we have it does not – elaborate the nature of the pleasure. It is only in relation to drama, and that too particularly tragedy, that he talks about catharsis. But the Indian theorists and aestheticians have thought deeply and have explored in depth the nature of this pleasure. For *rasa* is no less than the reader's response to a literary work. *Rasa* is what the reader experiences in his aesthetic rapture. It is not possible to give a single consistent translation of the word *rasa*. Sometimes it is translated as mood, but mood conveys a sense of transistorizes and, therefore, does not really mean *rasa.* Since *rasa* necessarily involves emotion 'aesthetic experience', 'aesthetic rapture' or 'aesthetic relish' would possibly be more appropriate. *Rasa*, after all, evidences a state of mind. Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta use it as the nucleus or the seminal concept that dominated the history of Sanskrit literary criticism for a long time. Even Kuntaka criticizes Udbhata for his belief that *rasa* could ever be conveyed in direct speech, and Kuntaka acknowledged his debt to Ānandavardhana. When Bharata says that a person has *rasa* he does not mean it literally. It is, as we have already suggested, the poem's capacity on account of some quality inhering in it, to induce the desirable state of mind in the reader. The experience of *rasa* is a private experience. Although the idea has an affinity with the Reader-Response theory or what the New Critics considered as affective fallacy, there is a vital difference between the two as far as the role of the reader is concerned. The reader as envisaged by Bharata is a *sahṛdaya* that is a well-read, sensitive and fully responsive person. Abhinavagupta also says that the glass in which the wine is served cannot appreciate its flavour.

In Western poetics and Reader-Response theory the reader is also given a high place of importance. But different critics look at the role of the reader from different points of view. The theory can be

broadly divided into four categories despite overlappings and cross-currents. Jonathan Culler adopts an objective view and holds that the meaning of a work of art is not an individual creation but "the result of applying to the text operations and inventions which constitute the institution of literature" (in Pati 135). He gives the example of lyric. In a lyric the poet observes the particular literary inventions associated with lyric: coherence, rhythm, individual reaction or subjective feelings, phonetic patterning etc. In order to appreciate the poem the reader must bear in mind these conventions. Even then within its limits the individual responses cannot be uniform. Culler says in *The Pursuit of Signs*: "For any work there is a range of interpretation, which can be defended within the inventions of readings" (Pati 2001: 136). Norman Holland would go one step further and would suggest that not only the reader references are variable, but also the test itself is variable. His argument is that the text is not an artifact, but an experience, which is shared by the author and the reader. The reader is the co-author. In other words, the author's text is not a finished product. The reader recreates it. The text emerges out of the vital interaction between the reader and the printed material. And as the response varies from reader to reader depending on the cultural level of the reader, his passions and prejudices, his beliefs and disbeliefs etc., every reader actually creates a subtext out of the text. Thus according to Holland every individual's self being variable, the text is also variable. Holland writes: "... meaning, like beauty does not inhere in the words of a page, but in the eye of the beholder. There is another factor. The text does generate a consensus of shared aesthetic experiences in spite of the fact that the readers never lose their personal idiosyncratic qualities and make different interpretations" (ib.). Holland further writes, "we see consensus because different readers are using the same material" (ib.). Stanley Fish, however, has a different opinion. For him the element of objectivity in the reader's reference is not the text. It is, according to him, actually due to the fact that all the readers make use of the same analytical strategies while responding to a text. The reader's mind is the community mind with individual differences. David Bleich, however, contends that there is a difference between response and interpretation. He says: "Every

reader's response is different – he has his own text, and the objectivity of the printed text is an illusion. When these symbolizations through responses are, however, resymbolized as interpretations, the reader has a chance to know the responses of others .... The assumption of the subjective paradigm is that collective similarity of response can be determined only by each undivided announcement of his response and subsequent communally motivated imaginative comparison. This assumption is validated by the ordinary fact that when each person says what he sees, each statement will be substantially different" (ib. 137). There are critics who believe that while reading the reader modifies the text and the text modifies the reader's self. Roman Ingarden, for example, writes: "... a literary work exists merely as a schemata. The reader actualizes it. Reading a text is a movement from part to whole and from whole to part, within its hermeneutical circle. It also means moving forward and backward and that too simultaneously. The reading has to be done at many levels for the text has backgrounds and foregrounds. Many expectations are modified in course of the reading. Ultimately it is the reader who resolves the text with an integrated whole" (ib. 138). Wolfgang Iser, who was deeply influenced by Ingarden, argues that the reader has to meet the text half way. He has to have an idea of the codes the text uses, which are different from the codes which language ordinarily uses. Through the analysis of this text, the reader is able to acquire not only a unified text, but also a unified self. According to Iser a literary work is situated between the author's text and the concretization of it by the reader. It is thus the reader who turns a text to a literary work. He further reaffirms: "The work is more than text for the text only takes on life when it is realized (by the reader). Communication must ultimately depend on the reader's creative activity. The written text imposes certain limits on its unwritten implications, but these implications, worked out by the reader's imagination endow it with for greater significance than it might have seemed to possess on its own" (ib. 139). Iser's contention implies that a text is indeterminate and a text can become a literary work only when a reader has entered into a dynamic interaction with it. Sartre in his essay "What is Literature" looked at the problem from a still different point of view. He observed: 'The author has

always a potential reader in mind, for a literary work is a production and like any other item of production, it takes the customer into consideration. So the reader is a part of the internal organization of the work of art". Roland Barthes in "The Pleasure of Reading the Text" separates pleasure of reading a text from its form. In other words, the pleasure has not much to do with the formal unity of a text. According to Barthes some texts "aim at giving pleasure through the luxuriance of creation, and do not have an aim of giving unified shape, leading to a unified self on the part of the reader and the reader gets himself merged in the text and the text in the reader" (ib. 140).

Reader-Response Theory gives primacy to the reader. The true reader is one who will try to explore the vision enshrined in the text and the way the vision is communicated. Since the language of the text is the language of poetry it is amenable to innumerable different responses and consequently different interpretations. To put it differently, if a reader remains satisfied with his response and interpretation it may be myopic and, therefore, deficient. Though the response may be valid for that reader at that particular point of time, there is always a possibility that the response may be not only deficient but defective as well.

We should always bear in mind that the text as an entity is an autonomous whole and every reader may be justified in considering his response as the correct response in recreating the vision enshrined in the text. A poem is amenable to multiple interpretations and all the interpretations may be valid provided internal and external evidences support an interpretation. But no interpretation can exhaust the text.

The point that a reader, through active interaction with the text, activizes the text finds its parallel in Abhinavagupta's famous utterance *kavirahṛdayākhyam sarasvatvāstatvam vijayatām* (The poet and the accomplished reader together make the poem). And the idea of pleasure which is regarded as the end of poetry by Aristotle and later by Coleridge and the exponents of the aesthetic movement of the late nineteenth century England, was also the concern of the Indian aestheticians in their theory of *Rasa*. But while Aristotle simply talks about pleasure the Indian theoreticians have closely examined the nature of the pleasure, its contributing elements, its

diverse manifestations, the different psychological stages through which it passes till it is fully enjoyed by the readers. It is therefore necessary to understand the Indian theory of *Rasa*, which is one of the most important foundations of Indian poetics.

Bharata says that without *rasa* a literary work signifies nothing: "*Na hi rasād-ṛte kasud artha pravartate".* Bharata also states how this transcendental experience of *rasa* comes into being through the combination of the factors known as *vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyābhicāribhāva*: Bharata explains his point with an analogy. Just as various ingredients go into the making of a fine beverage similarly *rasa* is brought into being through combination of a number of *bhāvas* It appears from the observations of Bharata that *rasa* is experienced by the spectator while witnessing a drama, and that *rasa* cannot be experienced in non-dramatic poetry. But though Bharata talks about *rasa* in connection with dramatic presentation only it is later applied to all kinds of poetry. As Coleridge talks about a poem as an organic entity with the analogy of a plant where the idea is the seed and everything develops *ab intra* and is later applied to almost everything. Everything, like a plant or like a poem, has origin, growth, decay and death. Civilization, for example, has a beginning, growth, decay and death. A language, a culture, a fashion, everything for that matter, undergoes the same process that the plant undergoes. In this respect Bharata, like Coleridge, is a semasiologist. However the subsequent critics discover that the principle of *Rasa* is the ulterior aesthetic principle, which covers the whole range of literary activity and forms the ultimate of poetry in its diverse forms.

Like Aristotle, Bharata is also sketchy in his elaboration. He does not care to distinguish between *saňcāribhāva* and *vyābhicāribhāva* nor does he care to point out the difference between the eight *sthāyībhāva* and the thirty-three *vyābhicāribhāva* that he mentions. It was Abhinavagupta, who for the first time, advocates that Bharata's classification of feelings is psychologically sound and held that the *sthāyībhāvas* always exist in the mind of man in the form of latest impressions. The *sthāyībhāvas* are the elemental human feelings, joys and horrors, hate, anger on relevant occasions. They differ from person to person only so far as a man is different from another man in terms of cultural level, educational background etc. In other

words, in regard to *sthāyībhāva* in man there are generic similarities and specific differences.

While *sthāyībhāvas* and *vyābhicāribhāvas* are the internal factors leading to aesthetic relish, *vibhāva* and *anubhāva* which do not belong to or come from the ordinary world but from the poetic world, represent the external factors of such experience. *Anubhāva* represents only a physical change or, more precisely, physical manifestations of the feeling in the tears, perspirations etc. It should be noted that Aristotle does not say anything about the physical manifestations of a feeling. Even when he talks about catharsis he is mainly concerned with the tension generated in the mind through the interaction of the opposite forces of pity and fear and their friendly resolution in the attainment of the calm of mind. The idea of catharsis is concerned with the mind, a feeling of tranquility and not with its bodily manifestation.

To Bharata *anubhāva* is a factor which indicates a word revealed through words, gestures and organic changes. *Anubhāva,* for Bharata, does not only refer to what follows *bhāva* (< *anu*) but also indicates a *bhāva*. According to the *alamkārikas* these physical changes that are nothing but manifestations of a mood are ordinary things in the commonplace world, but in poetry as reaction to dramatic representation they must be regarded as extraordinary. If the auditor sheds tears at the sight of the sorrows of Sita it is a vicarious experience he is reacting to.

One is reminded of Sidney's famous utterance in *An Apology for Poetry*: "Hers (Nature's) world is brazen: poets only deliver a golden."

According to Bhaṭṭalollaṭa *Rasa* is the developed form of a permanent mood which comes to maturity when it comes in contact with *vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyābhicāribhāva*. The *vibhāva* generates the mood, *anubhāva* manifests it and *vyābhicāribhāva* nourishes it and thus helps it to grow into *rasa*. Dandin also holds that *rasa* is a mature mood as in his implication of the poetic figure *rasavat* he makes it clear that the feeling of love is developed with *śṛṅgāra-rasa* through its contact with the excitants and accessories.

Śaṅkuka, the next critic of importance, thinks that *rasa* is not, as Bhattalollata argues, a developed permanent feeling, but a copy

thereof. He gives the analogy of a painted horse, *citraturaṇganyāya-nusāriṇi-pratīti*. The actor through his fine imitative faculty exhibits on the stage the *vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyābhicāribhāva*, which, though artificial, create an illusion of reality. It is this experience of illusion, which Śaṅkuka describes as Śaṅkuka *rasa*. For Śaṅkuka *rasa* is experienced when a work of art can induce in the reader or the spectator what Coleridge calls 'a willing suspension of disbelief'. Abhinavagupta, in his turn, combats the view of Śaṅkuka, because Bharata never refers to *rasa* as a semblance of a mental condition or an experience of an illusion of reality. To describe *rasa* as a copy is to presuppose the existence of the object imitated. But in *rasavāda* the object which appears as a copy of a permanent mood cannot be traced. The physical manifestations like perspiration or horrification or some violent gestures cannot be regarded as this object, because they are perceptible entities and no spectator can partake of them. Furthermore, since the spectator does not know the mental condition or the accompanying behavior of the original actor he is not in a position to judge whether the behaviour of the actor is actually an imitation of the behavior of the original character.

Since Śaṅkuka's theory does not carry conviction Bhaṭṭanāyaka shifts the emphasis from the objective to the subjective aspect of the issue and tries to explain *rasa* by minutely analysing the inward experience of the sensitive appreciators, and in contradistinction to the earlier theorists propounds a theory of aesthetic enjoyment. According to him *rasa* is neither known, nor produced nor revealed. It is an experience of bliss generated in the mind of the spectator. The realization of *rasa* can generate the experience of supreme bliss only when it is felt to be belonging to the spectator only. However Bhaṭṭanāyaka does not negate the ideas of *vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyābhicāribhāva*. His only point is that it is the spectator who experiences *rasa* as a blissful state of enjoyment occasioned by the *vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyābhicāribhāvas* represented by the actor through the dramatization of certain feelings. Unless these *vibhāvas* etc. are properly manifested *rasa* as the aesthetic reaction of the spectator cannot be generated. The idea has an interesting affinity with Eliot's theory of 'objective correlative'. Applied to the theory of Bhaṭṭanāyaka it would mean that unless there is a proper objective

correlative on the part of the actor the spectator cannot experience *rasa*, because it would not be generated in that case.

Bhaṭṭanāyaka also combats the view that *rasānanda*, the experience of aesthetic rapture is identical with *Brahmānanda*, the supreme bliss of communion with God, because, he contends, that while in *Brahmānanda* there is a complete detachment from the mundane world, in *rasānanda* there is dissociation from the characters presented on the stage, but there is an emotional involvement as well. The auditor's reaction is simultaneously sensuous, emotional and intellectual.

However, coming back to the problem of the nature of the aesthetic experience Abhinabagupta offers a view which is slightly different from Bhaṭṭanāyaka's. According to him *rasa* is the union of the permanent mood with the *vibhāvas* etc. that suggests *rasa*. It is the power of suggestion that leads to the realization of *rasa* as an extra-ordinary state of relish. For him *pratīti* of *rasa* is nothing other than *abhivyakti*. Abhinavagupta is an important exponent of the theory of *Dhvani* or suggestion. He believes that when *bhāvakatva* is stimulated by the literary excellences and four recognized forms of acting in a drama, the mind of the spectator transcends the mundane and is transported to the world of aesthetic bliss. The *bhāvas* are named so, because they lead to the aesthetic experience. The *bhāvakatva* becomes effective when a composition is free from literary blemishes and the actor is capable of dramatizing appropriately the feelings inherent in a situation. In that case the spectator gets into the right frame of mind to discover the universal dimension of the particular scenes or situations being dramatized. This idea of Abhinabagupta has a striking affinity with the Aristotelian idea of the concrete universal, an idea according to which the dramatist, by presenting a particular character focusses on certain universal elements so that he character assumes a universal dimension. By portraying the jealousy of Othello or the ambition of Macbeth Shakespeare actually depicts universal passions and thus though Othello or Macbeth is an individual each becomes universal and timeless. Both Abhinabagupta and Bhaṭṭanāyaka believe in the Aristotelian idea of 'concrete universal', but there is a difference between them about the process through which the particular attains

the status of the universal. For Bhaṭṭanāyaka it happens through the operation of *bhāvakatva* but for Abhinabagupta it is actually effected in the mind of a *sahṛday* or an intellectually accomplished person when the *guṇas* and *alamkāras* are appropriately used. The right *guṇas* or *alamkāras* or the appropriate literary and linguistic devices can be used by a poet only when his mind is in white heat, and when, what Coleridge describes as the Secondary Imagination, operates and shapes all things into one. It diffuses, dissolves and dissipates to unify the discordant elements. When this happens the meaning and the music, the denotation and the connotation, the sound and the sense, the matter and the manner, the idea and the image and all other elements become organically interrelated, and contribute to the totality of the poem. And when this unity is achieved the reader or the spectator experiences the bliss of aesthetic rapture of being transported to the world of art, which is universal and timeless.

So, according to Abhinabagupta generalization is only a function of *abhivyakti.* However, it must be said to the credit of Abhinavagupta that there is novelty in his view that the *sthāyībhāva* or the permanent mood must lie dormant in the heart of the appreciator to be evoked into the aesthetic rapture and universalization. Just as, if a thing is not there light cannot reveal it, similarly the appreciator or the *sahṛday* must have in him the capacity to be evoked into aesthetic delight. It is for this reason that the *sahṛday* must be a man of experience and intellectual accomplishments; he must be sensitive and must have a well-developed literary sensibility. At the moment of aesthetic rapture the *sahṛday* forgets his mundane existence and the trivialities of life. He loses his special form and individuality and is elevated to a higher transcendental level of consciousness and attains the celestial state of aesthetic rapture. This celestial mental state is described by Abhinavagupta as *sarvasamājikaraṇa:*

The important point here is that the individual personality of the *sahṛday* must be transcended in order to enter the world of aesthetic relish. In this respect one would recall Eliot's doctrine of impersonality. The reader, like the poet, must depersonalize himself to be absorbed in the poem. The idea, so far as critical reaction is concerned, has also an affinity with Arnold's theory of the fallacy of the personal estimate. The critic must set aside his personal passions

and prejudices, likes and dislikes, if he has to make an objective assessment of a work of art. What is true about the critic is also true about the *sahṛday*: he must depersonalize himself in order to appreciate the universal dimension of the literary work and experience the bliss of aesthetic rapture. According to Abhinabagupta the realization of *rasa* lasts as long as the *vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyābhicāribhāvas* are in operation. This is so, because it is the *vibhāvas* that evoke the latent impression in the *sahṛday*.

Abhinabagupta also makes an insightful observation when he says that the realization of the aesthetic relish gives a kind of cognition, which is different from the usual type of such cognition in which the objects are realized in their distinct characters. Here, again, what Abhinabagupta says takes us back to Aristotle's contention that poetry is knowledge and that the kind of knowledge that poetry offers is intuitive knowledge in the sense that it cannot be communicated in the form of a logical proposition. It is a sudden revelation that illuminates life. Jagannātha illustrates this with a fine analogy. Just as a lighted lamp reveals not only the nearby objects but also reveals itself as well similarly while the pure consciousness manifests various moods it also scintillates in its luminous splendour. Jagannātha holds that the excitants and other upshots are internalized in the moods with the help of many instruments of cognition. The experience of *rasa*, the peculiar feeling of the man of poetic sensibility is partly akin to the consciousness of bliss growing in the mind of an ascetic in a state of profound meditation.

Abhinabagupta identifies seven factors, which he considers inimical to the aesthetic relish:

1. Absence of plausibility in the events described;
2. The realization of the excitants etc. as confined to the appreciator's own self
3. The realization of the excitants etc belonging solely to the other;
4. Awareness of one's personal joy and sorrow;
5. Lack of clear cognition, on account of improper presentation of means;
6. Relegation of *rasa* to a subordinate position and
7. The presence of doubt as to the exact nature of the mood delineated.

In terms of Western poetics all the points are subsumed in Aristotle's contention that an action must be probable. Probable impossibility is better than improbable possibility. The second and the third points of Abhinabagupta parallel Aristotle's dictum that what is presented must have a universal dimension and sense of timelessness The action may be related to a particular time and place but it must transcend time and space in its appeal and significance The fourth point of Abhinabagupta is what Arnold calls personal fallacy. Though Arnold speaks from the point of view of the critic, it is equally true of the poet. If the poet is too personal and cannot evince what Keats calls 'negative capability' the work will fail as a work of art and therefore will not be able to evoke the right kind of psychological state necessary for the aesthetic relish. The fifth point of Abhinabgupta when seen in the light of the Western poetics is what Eliot calls 'objective correlative'. The objective correlative fails when the ideas are not properly embodied in characters and situations. Abhinabagupta's sixth point – the relegation of *rasa* to a subordinate position – takes place, according to Western poetics, when literature is used as propaganda. In that case literature as an aesthetic object becomes eclipsed by the cognitive discourse. In other words, when the appeal is more to the intellect than to the aesthetic sensibility *rasa* would naturally take the back seat.

In order to foreground the paramount importance of an emotional mood in poetry the exponents of *Dhvani* theory argue that in a good specimen of poetic art the expressed idea, comprised of the *vibhāvas* etc., renders itself subservient to the implicit mood of superior charm. According to them the suggestion of a fact or an imaginative mood terminates ultimately in the suggestion of the emotional mood of supreme attraction. The main point which distinguishes the experience of the original character from the aesthetic relish of the *sahrday* is that whereas the characters presented in their particularities are directly involved in their actions, the appreciator experiences them only in their generalized aspects. He experiences the emotions only vicariously. The bliss that is derived from the nature of the emotional mood or feeling that informs a particular situation comes from within one's soul.

When Bhaṭṭanāyaka upholds the principle of *sādhāraṇikaraṇa* – the realization of *vibhāvas* in their universal aspect – he also looks upon it as something associated with the perceiver's own being. It is because of *sādhāraṇikaraṇa* that the *laukika* causes are transformed into *alaukika vibhāvas*, and, accordingly, the aesthetic relish of *rasa* differs from the ordinary forms of cognition. At the time of aesthetic rapture *sahṛday* does not remain conscious of his own personality. He divests himself, momentarily though, of all personal attributes and identifies himself with the persona.

Jagannātha is at one with his illustrious predecessors like Mammaṭa and Visvanātha in accepting the doctrine of Abhinabagupta on aesthetic experience. Jagannātha also endorses the view that the perceiver feels a sense of identity with the original character and, therefore, shares his emotions. One might raise the objection that it is not possible for the perceiver to experience aesthetic rapture or the supreme bliss when unpleasant moods, such as grief, horror, detestation etc. are presented in the poem. The point that Jagannātha tries to make bears interesting affinity with Aristotle's idea of pleasure. The fact that a spectator or a reader enjoys a tragedy is an evidence of the fact that even the depiction of pain and the spectator's identification of feeling with the tragic protagonist do not impede his enjoyment or his judgment. It is so, according to Aristotle, because the spectator or the reader does not get actually involved in the tragic situation. The tears that he sheds for the sorrows of Hecuba, for example, are tears that the angels weep. It is here that the transcending power of poetry lies. The pain is vicarious. One must, however, make a distinction between the unreal pain that one may experience in a bad dream and the real pain which paradoxically leads to aesthetic pleasure when one experiences the tragic feelings or acute pain delineated in a poem or dramatized through a character presented on the stage. After all the identity that the reader feels with the character is not real but a temporary suspension of disbelief. It is transcendence over all limitations when one's individuality is kept in abeyance or is put to sleep at the time of perception of poetry and the aesthetic relish that goes with it, and it is due to this transcendence that the aesthetic relish is possible. The reader is transmuted by the proper organization of the *vibhāvas* and

is transported into the world of imagination to enjoy the aesthetic rapture.

According to both Bhaṭṭanāyaka and Abhinabagupta the state of aesthetic pleasure is one of unmixed bliss. The pleasure, according to him, is not so much due to the subject matter or imaginative handling of it as due to one's own refined literary sensibility and ability to depersonalize oneself and merge with the character. The source of pleasure is in one's own being. A powerful imaginative artifact only taps the source, activates it and leads the reader to the transcendental plane of poetic truth, the experience of which produces a universal bliss of aesthetic relish. At the time of the enjoyment of *rasa*, a particular state of mind is reached and the bliss associated with one's pure consciousness flashes forth. Since the cognition of *rasa* differs from ordinary or *laukika* forms of the process, emotions like *karuṇā*, v*ibhāva* or *bhayānaka* which cause pity, disgust or horror respectively, are connected with *rasa* the relish of which is a universal bliss and cannot be compared to ordinary pain or pleasure as Eliot said very emphatically that the distinction between art emotion and life emotion is absolute.

It is evident that the Indian theory of *Rasa* and Aristotle's idea of pleasure as the end of poetry has a fundamental affinity in conception. Both Aristotle and the exponents of *Rasa* theory believe in the experience of an aesthetic bliss as a reaction to a powerful literary work. And the idea of Aristotle as adumbrated by the subsequent Western critics like Horace, Longinus, Coleridge and Eliot, makes it increasingly clear that the pleasure derived from art is ontologically different from and superior to the mundane pleasure. Although Horace, and following Horace, Sidney brought in the idea of instruction as part of the objective of poetry, they do not however, in any way reject or controvert Aristotle's view that the end of poetry is pleasure They only supplement it with the idea of instruction. However, a close look at the history of Indian *Rasa* theory that starts with Bharata shows how meticulous and thorough the Indian aestheticians have been in analyzing the nature of the aesthetic bliss. The output of their observations and alert attention to the minutest nuances of the issues involved in the aesthetic reaction to an art object looks simply staggering. The classification of emotions and their

ensuents and accessories, comparison of the nature of the aesthetic pleasure with the pleasure of communion with God show how profoundly they have explored the subject. Here is opulence in sharp contrast to the reticence of Aristotle who talks only about pity and fear in regard to tragedy and comic delight in regard to comedy in some detail. To say this is not to imply that Aristotle is deficient in his understanding of the nature of pleasure. His critical utterances clearly indicate that he was fully aware of it, but he did not care to amplify or elaborate it, or classify the different kinds of pleasure, possibly because the list can never be exhaustive. The eight *rasas* that Bharata enumerates in his *Nāṭyaśāstra* subsume in them the innumerable permutations and combinations. Ānandavardhana was right in his belief in the unity of *rasa* and that the enjoyment of quietitude or *śānta* makes itself felt in the experience of all the other *rasas*, very much like the combination of all the colours producing the white rays of the sun. Aristotle only struck at the root and left the rest to the imagination and literary sensibility of the disciplined reader.

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Oriente como discurso en el discurso de Occidente

ISMAIL EL-OUTMANI

"No artist of any art has his meaning alone"
T. S. Eliot (*Critical Essays*)

El objeto del presente trabajo consiste en efectuar una serie de reflexiones sobre el discurso que caracteriza la relación entre Oriente y Occidente, especialmente en el ámbito artístico. De esta relación se han hecho eco múltiples disciplinas, desde la historiografía y la antropología hasta la sociología y la crítica literaria pasando por la psicología, la filosofía y los estudios culturales. La realidad histórica hace que todo discurso teórico, metateórico o analítico sobre la interreacción entre Oriente y Occidente sea al fin y al cabo un ejercicio ideológico o, si se prefiere, político. Y apolítico no va a ser, seguramente, mi discurso en esta contribución.

Decir "Oriente" evocaba en Occidente sobre todo en los siglos XVIII y XIX de un lado un espacio de fantasía, exotismo y erotismo y del otro un colectivo perezoso, impostor e irracional. En el léxico geográfico, Oriente es aquella parte del mundo que está situada al este de Europa y que se llama Asia, más concretamente Asia oriental, conocida también como Extremo Oriente (*Enciclopaedia Britannica*). Históricamente hablando, Oriente estuvo siempre vinculado al comercio y al imperio, y filosóficamente asociado a ideas y ritos exóticos. Pero desde la publicación en 1978 del libro de E. Said entitulado *Orientalismo*, el concepto ha sido objeto de una particular atención en Occidente.

Said – que, siguiendo a Foucault, relaciona el discurso con el poder en su tesis de trabajo, pero que a diferencia de Foucault y Derrida asume una posición políticamente historicista – deconstruyó "Oriente" para poder reconstruir el discurso que acerca de él han producido generaciones de artistas, viajeros, políticos, misionarios, académicos y autores occidentales. Tal discurso es conocido hoy con el nombre de "Orientalismo". Convencido de que todo discurso conlleva poder y estimula oposición (porque no es fijo y responde a las circunstancias de su tiempo) Said señalaba que Oriente es, desde una óptica histórico-cultural, un producto de la fantasía occidental que ha mistificado lo oriental; mientras que "Orientalismo" ha sido, ideológicamente hablando, un mecanismo muy eficaz en manos del imperialismo occidental.

En la actualidad, Oriente, fuera del uso común, viene a significar y abarcar todo lo que no pertenece genética y genéricamente a Occidente. La hegemonía política de Occidente presupone la hegemonía de su cultura. En mi concepción propia, Oriente significa lo "otro" o el "otro"; una "otredad" que reúne aquellas culturas y pueblos que no pertenecen a la llamada Civilización Occidental. Así, se habla en Occidente de civilización y de literatura, de arte y de música, etc, como productos intrínsica e inherentemente occidentales, pero al mudar estos conceptos a otras culturas se les asigna una etiqueta implicando la subordinación y la inferioridad, o el anacronismo, de aquellas culturas. Así, se dice por ejemplo: la civilización china, la civilización musulmana, la literatura africana, la literatura chicana, el arte hindú, el arte japonés, la música oriental, etc. En el contexto político-económico mundial, existen, sin embargo, unas expresiones muy mediatizadas y tan monopolizadas por el discurso occidental que difícilmente se dejarían emprestar por otras culturas, expresiones como "ayuda humanitaria", "desarrollo" o "tolerancia". Prestar ayuda humanitaria a las colonias de ayer, ayudarlas a desarrollarse, y aparentar un espíritu tolerante hacia los ex-colonizados es la bula moderna que Occidente se ha inventado para cubrir su catastrófico legado imperialista y tratar de limpiarse la conciencia. En pocas palabras, sólo la civilización occidental es universal, las otras civilizaciones sólo son aspirantes a serlo.

Un objeto de arte, al igual que el texto, contiene siempre un significado invisible. El espectador estetizante encuentra sentido en la superficie de un cuadro; el espectador politizante busca el sentido invisible del cuadro atravezándolo con la mirada. Es como decir que cada cuadro representa un cuadro solo pero dos artes: el arte expuesto y, por lo tanto, visible, en la galería o el museo en forma de cuadro, y el arte invisible que trasciende las dimensiones actuales del mismo cuadro, y del propio museo o galería. La crítica hermenéutica del arte, que es indiscutiblemente la corriente más predominante, propone estos dos tipos de lectura: la estetizante (aestheticizing), que se usa mucho y la politicizante (politicizing) que está en desuso casi completo. La primera "presume que una obra de arte en general trasciende las condiciones sociales de su creación humana", meintras que la segunda "presupone que las obras de arte cuanto menos reflejan o pueden incluso ser determinadas por los intereses -político, cultural, económico u otro- de grupos sociales y clases específicos en momentos específicos de la coyuntura histórica" (Hayden White 1973: 290). Por motivos que he venido señalando, los críticos occidentales suelen ser estetizantes en su lectura, permitiendo que la lectura politizante se convierta en una especialidad de la crítica oriental, tercer-mundista o postcolonial. En mi opinión, la lectura más idónea es la que se propone encuadrar el cuadro en sus contextos estético y político, o ideológico, porque, como bien dice Mitchell, "para comprender el poder de las imágenes, tenemos que mirar a sus relaciones internas de dominio y resitencia, así como a sus relaciones externas con los espectadores y el mundo" (W.J.T. Mitchell 1994: 324).

¿Cómo Mirar un Cuadro?, de Susan Woodford, (de la colección: "Introducción a la Historia del Arte") es un manual diseñado para principiantes en el estudio de obras de arte. La colección, patrocinada por la prestigiosa Universidad de Cambridge (GB) y de imprescindible consulta para los estudiantes de arte, pretende para sí un carácter universal, por occidental. De echo, el texto y los cuadros reproducidos (con la excepción de dos: uno chino y otro persa) tratan exclusivamente del arte de la Europa occidental. Esta estrategia discursiva es muy común en Occidente y tiene como consecuencia inculcar en los estudiantes una base de conocimiento artístico

(historia, definiciones, léxico, criterios, etc) básicamente occidental, que excluye a priori el "otro" arte. Semejantes realidades se dan en todos los campos de las humanidades. En la literatura, por ejemplo, el cánon, el paradigma, la obra maestra, el genio son inevitablemente occidentales, y por consiguiente universales. El libro del eminente académico norteamericano Harold Bloom sobre el cánon, por citar una obra destinada a influir en los lectores occidentales, confirma esta tesis. Entre las privilegiadas obras que según Bloom mejor representan el cánon literario, escasísimas son orientales. Este juicio de valor se puede ampliar a toda la actividad literaria, tanto teórica como crítica, que se lleva a cabo en Occidente. A los que tratamos de literatura comparada nos llama la atención especialmente el hecho de que esta disciplina es temática y metodológicamente eurocéntrica, lo que requiere una inmediata operación de "descolonización" (A. Gnisci 1996: 265–74).

La exclusión del elemento oriental está estrechamente vinculada a una situación linguística anómala. Tengo presente en este sentido 1) la propaganda semi-oficial alegando la imposibilidad de aprender idiomas como el Arabe, el Chino o el Swahili, por citar idiomas con una rica tradición literaria, sobre todo oral; 2) los clásicos prejuicios culturales a nivel popular sobre los hablantes de esos idiomas; 3) la ausencia de una voluntad firme por parte de los académicos para aprender idiomas no occidentales; y 4) la falta de una política educacional estatal que despierte un interés real y humano en el "otro" y lo "otro". Como consecuencia de esta situación, las culturas no occidentales se han visto privadas de su universalidad o caracter universal.

Cuando se trata de escribir, exponer, o explicar el discurso artístico colonial a los jóvenes y mayores en el viejo continente la gran mayoría de historiadores, críticos y organizadores de muestras suelen subrayar dos cosas: el valor estético y el interés histórico, y con ello ocultar la ideología de los cuadros orientalistas. Para ejemplificarlo, he escogido dos libros-catálogos que conciernen a pintores franceses, que son para muchos los mejores exponentes de la pintura orientalista. El primer libro-catálogo data de 1975 y se titula *L'Orient en question, 1825–1875*, y el otro de 1982 y lleva por título *Orientalism: The Near East in French Painting, 1800–1880*.

En su introducción a *L'Orient en question*, Marielle Latour habla de Oriente como un espacio lejano y romántico que ella llama "ailleurs" o "Lå-bas" y de los orientalistas como personas sensibles motivadas por el deseo de conocer una civilización diferente; algunos de los cuales, añade Latour en un estilo apologético, arriesgaban su propia vida para realizar ese deseo. La relación colonialismo-orientalismo la esquiva Latour con una retórica diplomática bien precisa: "Malgré le rôle -dice- joué par les guerres coloniales dans la découverte de l'Afrique du Nord, celles-ci restent étrangères a notre propos." (p.6). Los otros textos reunidos en *L'Orient en question* adoptan el mismo enfoque: se destacan el romanticismo de los artistas orientalistas, el realismo exótico de sus obras y las diferencias estéticas que los separan; pero ni una sola palabra sobre la dimensión política de este arte colonial. Una vez más, el espectador convencional ve manipulada su valoración de la pintura orientalista, en este caso francesa.

Menos diplomático es Donald Rosenthal, autor del segundo libro-catálogo, el cual sostiene que "la característica común del orientalismo del siglo XIX [en la pintura] fue su afán de crear un realismo documental [...] el florecimiento de la pintura orientalista... era estrechamente vinculado al apogeo de la expansión colonialista europea en el siglo XIX" (L. Nochlin 1991: 33–34). Pero este vínculo no implica, según Rosenthal, que el arte y la literatura orientalistas contribuyeron de alguna forma a perpetuar la visión colonialista de Occidente, lo que le permite renunciar a discutir la carga ideológica de estos cuadros ("French Orientalist painting -escribe Rosenthal- will be discussed in terms of its aesthetic quality and historical interest, and no attempt will be made at a re-evaluation of its political uses." Citado por L. Nochlin 1991: 34). En otras palabras, Rosenthal, Latour y los otros utilizan las mismas estrategias que sus antecesores, perpetuando de esta forma el status quo del discurso artístico occidental.

Revaluación, que mencionaba Rosenthal hace poco, implica que hay evaluación previa. Pero ¿de quién es esa canonizada evaluación? Y ¿cuál es el "interés histórico" que impide que haya una revaluación de los usos políticos de las obras de arte? Una contralectura –admitiendo que evaluar un cuadro equivale a leer un cuadro–, una

lectura alternativa, de ciertos cuadros orientalistas revelará y relevará la invisible falacia que estimula y sostiene la lectura eufemísticamente denominada estética y/o histórica que de la pintura orientalista se hace en Occidente. En Occidente, la interpretación de un cuadro desde la antigüedad hasta el siglo XVIII consistía generalmente en leer en el cuadro la "historia" o relato que éste había intentado convertir en imágenes (Louis Marin 1982: 6). En esta operación, el nombre del cuadro tenía para el 'espectador' la misma función que el título tiene para el lector de un relato o texto. Pero en la pintura orientalista, el título ha sido funcionalmente un elemento desorientador para el espectador occidental encuadrando el "horizonte de espera" (concepto de H.R. Jauss) de este último dentro de una estrategia orientada hacia la reafirmación de la imágen que Occidente, como justamente constata Said, "inventó" de Oriente.

Vamos a releer algunos cuadros de notables pintores orientalistas como Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863), Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904) y Henri Regnault (1843–1871) para ilustrar, y eventualmente poder apreciar, mejor la importancia de la dimensión ideológica en la lectura del discurso artístico orientalista. Antes, me gustaría señalar que la relectura de la pintura orientalista no tiene porqué ser tan ideologizada como la de Linda Nochlin que ata todas las pinceladas a la idea del imperio (Linda Nochlin 1991), ni tan canónica como la del historiador del imperialismo John M. MacKenzie (1995: 43–70, especialmente) que favorece los criterios de tipo estético y semihistórico.

Delacroix en la apreciada serie *Summa Artis* sobre el arte (tomo XXXIV) es presentado al lector como un pintor que aborrecia el realismo en pintura, y entre cuyos cuadros se encuentran las obras maestras del romanticismo. Los autores del tomo comentan que, como pintor religioso, Delacroix es probablemente el mejor del siglo XIX francés (pp. 486–91). Lo que no encontramos es alguna referencia a la dimensión 'orientalista' en aquella pintura; lo que nos lleva a decir que los autores en cuestión han ocultado una importante parte de la verdad sobre este pintor francés.

El título "La Mort de Sardanapale" (1927–8) de Delacroix da a entender que el cuadro reproduce la última hora en la vída del soberano asirio Sardanápalo, el cual al prever su inminente derrota,

ordenó que se destruyeran sus propiedades y sus mujeres. Sin embargo, analizando el cuadro llaman nuestra atención sobre todo dos cosas: 1) la sustitución de la sensación de angustia que debe tener un déspota a punto de morir por una actitud de indiferencia y distanciamiento, y 2) las mujeres por destruir posan eróticamente o reposan resignadas ante sus asesinos en vez de huir o resistir.

Resultado de una simbiósis de miedo machista, fantasía esotérica y violencia orientalista, "La Mort de Sardanapale" ilustra la psique de un pintor obsesionado por un erotismo sádico y una ideología posesivamente romántica conviviendo trágicamente en un escenario oriental lujoso y opulento para expresar, en palabras de Linda Nochlin (op. cit.), el dominio de Oriente por el hombre occidental. La temática del cuadro se ajusta probablemente al contexto histórico, pero la muerte anunciada en el título no se constituye o manifiesta como tal en el cuadro. El exotismo de Delacroix se sobrepone a la muerte de Sardanápalo.

Gérôme no se desvía mucho de la línea trazada por Delacroix aunque acude a una técnica distinta, naturalista, que proyecta un aire de racionalidad en sus cuadros. El fotorealismo de "Le Garde du Sérail" (1859) o "Le Marché d'ésclaves" (sin fecha) ejemplifica óptimamente esta técnica. El guardia del serrallo en el primer cuadro encarna, por su color negro, su congelada actitud agresiva y el arma de fuego que lleva, el carácter violento y poco sensual de aquella gente, asi como el secretismo que se atribuye a su mundo. Gérôme parece insinuar que ésta es una situación "objetivamente" provocadora, que legitima la necesidad de desafiar al guardia, derrotarle, y hacerse con la llave y la protección de las mujeres encerradas. La escena en algún sentido libera el reprimido deseo del varón europeo de ser un héroe romántico en su propia fantasía.

"Le Marché d'ésclaves" por su parte recrea con parecido empirismo otra faceta de la vida cotidiana oriental, como es el comercio en esclavos. Cuatro hombres negocian la suerte de una esclava. La desnudez de esta última, que no está justificada ni histórica ni estéticamente, es desde una óptica orientalista una pincelada que refuerza el doble mensaje del cuadro, es decir: 1) que los varones orientales tienen un poder absoluto sobre las mujeres, y 2) que los occidentales, hombres superiores a sus homólogos orientales bajo

todos los aspectos, tienen el derecho absoluto de dominar a estos últimos. El trasfondo de "Le marché d'ésclaves", viene a dramatizar esta imágen reproduciendo una oscura estructura de pathos, una estructura típicamente oriental con hombres dominantes y mujeres sumisas, rebajadas al nivel de los perros callejeros. El discurso de Gérôme como individuo intelectual burgués que visiblemente condena el comercio en seres humanos alimenta invisiblemente la colectiva imágen construida en Europa, consciente y subconscientemente, sobre el oriental. Ello se caracteriza temáticamente en la pintura orientalista por el pintoresco contraste que se crea a menudo entre mujeres bellas y blancas pero tristes y hombres satisfechos pero negros y malos. Tal discurso implica que el occidental es el único capaz de destruir la patética estructura, haciendo uso de la fuerza si fuera necesario, para devolver la felicidad a las bellas infelíces y castigar a los malos felíces.

"Exécution sans jugement sous les rois maures" fue pintado por Henri Regnault en 1870. El título de este cuadro es muy sugestivo: los moros, musulmanes, u orientales matan sin más. Y para dar una dimensión histórica, y por consiguiente más credibilidad a esta "verdad", Regnault situa la ejecución en una referencialidad medieval tan famosa como distante, lo que lleva al espectador occidental a pensar que la ejecución arbitraria, la violencia y la mentalidad autoritaria tienen una larga tradición en Oriente. La ejecución por guillotina por el contrario no fue nunca, como señala certeramente Linda Nochlin, un tema en sí para los pintores europeos, porque era considerada como una medida racional necesaria para imponer la ley. "Exécution san jugement..." coloca al espectador ideal abajo, al pie de las escaleras, para que esté lejos del temible ejecutor y al mismo tiempo cerca, muy cerca de la victima, del cuerpo decapitado, y de la sangre que corre. Psicológicamente hablando, es una posición desde la cual se puede sentir vivamente el escalofrio y simpatizar con la víctima, pero sobre todo desde la cual se puede condenar la ejecución sin temer al impetuoso protagonista. Aquí también, el trasfondo difícilmente podría ser atribuido a un factor estético. Visto que los bellos diseños que encuadran la ejecución suelen ser identificados en Occidente con el arte islámico, no podemos descartar que la función de ese trasfondo consiste en evocar

esa identificación y contextualmente asociar al Islam y a los musulmanes con la violencia y la agresividad.

El supuestamente apolítico realismo documental que estudiosos como el citado John M. MacKenzie quieren ver en la pintura orientalista es pues falso. Lo observamos en otro cuadro de Gérôme, "El encantador de serpientes" (ca. 1860), que documenta en términos inconfundibles la ideología colonialista en el siglo pasado. Además del tramposo título, es importante detenerse también ante el imponente decoro que adorna los muros. La caligrafía, el texto que cubre los muros tiene un aire de autenticidad absoluta, autenticidad que garantiza a la escena oriental una veracidad igualmente absoluta. Gérôme llevó este autenticismo tan lejos que su pintura llega a constituir un caso de arte sin arte.

Consciente tal vez del poder que tiene esta técnica para convencer al espectador (occidental) de la autenticidad de lo que ve, Gérôme se dispuso a trivializar el legado artístico islámico creando una situación culturalmente mesquina y socialmente patética. El texto coránico, que es el texto más puro y noble, además de paradigmático por excelencia, para los musulmanes, viene utilizado para una escena mundana y trivial. El desnudo del niño tiene al parecer la misma función discursiva que el de la esclava en el cuadro anterior, y que no es el de reproducir inocentemente la realidad. Situando al niño, símbolo hasta los catorce o quince años de la inocencia humana en el Islam, con los genitales hacia el texto coránico, tiene como efecto la profanación y trivialización de un discurso religioso y noble para los musulmanes. El hecho de posicionar, desde la óptica contraria, al niño con el "trasero" hacia el espectador no es por nada menos significante. Es una escena que podía alimentar la fantasía líbido-pedófila del europeo en el siglo pasado, y condenar al hombre oriental simultáneamente. Una descodificación de otros signos y contrastes semiótico-culturales como la serpiente, el flautista y los espectadores debería reforzar esta lectura del cuadro.

Reconocer que, a diferencia de los orientalismos inglés y francés, el orientalismo español, que algunos llaman "africanismo", no fue impulsado por una estudiada filosofía política de carácter imperialista, no significa que España estaba desprovista de apetencias expansionistas (particularmente en Marruecos), o que los explora-

dores, militares y aventureros que se instalaron en el país norteafricano mantenían una actitud éticamente correcta hacia los llamados "indígenas". En cualquier caso, destacar del orientalismo español, como hace el historiador Victor Morales Lezcano (1989), únicamente la proyección cultural, reflejada esencialmente en las letras y las artes, nos conducirá por la peligrosa vía de la simplificación, cuando no de la negación, de la dimensión ideológica del orientalismo español. Sobre todo sabiendo que estas manifestaciones culturales producto del "africanismo marroquista" (término de Morales Lezcano) han contribuido considerablemente a forjar los recursos retóricos que hallamos, aunque bajo formas más depuradas y secularizadas, en el discurso español sobre Marruecos y el resto de los países islámicos.

Los casos, unos años ha, del catedrático de la Complutense Guillermo Quintana que calificaba a los orientales de "torpes" y el Islam de "religión violenta entre sí" (El diario El País: 5 enero 1997. Vid. sobre el caso también El País: 6, 8, 9 y 10 de enero, 1997) y de J.A. Gómez Marín que escribía en el *Diario 16* que la civilización musulmana constituye para Occidente un "gravísimo riesgo civilizatorio" cuyas prácticas sociales "es preciso incluir en el ámbito de la barbarie y el atraso histórico" (Citado por M. Marín 1996: 114), son dos ejemplos caseros y sin depurar de este fenómeno (En su *El Islam* ..., 1996, Gema Martín Muñoz expone los prejuicios, y errores – así como la falsa metodología adoptada– que caracterizan la información que profesores y enseñantes pasan a sus estudiantes en la fase pre-universitaria). Como lo es en estos días el caso del arabista Serafín Fanjúl, catedrático de la Autónoma (UAM) y reconocido conocedor del mundo árabe/ musulmán (Oriente), que un día sí y otro también hace apología de la superioridad de Occidente, a expensas de la España andalusí y su legado, del Islam y los musulmanes, contra los cuales arremete en sus declaraciones y escritos, sin ningún razonamiento racional o académico, manifestando una peligrosa actitud, abierta e ideológicamente orientalista (que se puede averiguar examinando su reciente *Andalus contra España*, entrando por su nombre en la Internet / Red o siguiendo sus comentarios en algunos diarios españoles).

El atraso, que presupone la superioridad intelectual del visitante que lo constata y requerrá eventualmente su intervención política o militar, es un argumento fundamental en la retórica colonial. Progreso, por su parte, es el pretexto geopolítico que el aparato colonial alega para justificar la propia intervención militar. Es suficiente repasar algunas obras artísticas y ensayísticas para notar cómo se articula este lenguaje (verbal y no verbal) orientalista en el discurso español.

Las siguientes palabras de Pedro Antonio de Alarcón (1833–1891) – para algunos el mejor narrador español del siglo XIX – que sustraigo de su *Diario de un testigo de la guerra de África*, además de reflejar una mentalidad arrogante, muestran cómo un solo individuo se pone a decidir, aunque luego no llegue a cumplirse su deseo, por un entero pueblo el destino de éste:

> Quiero que en futuros tiempos, cuando este país [Marruecos] despierte de su mortal letargo; cuando entre la comunión de los pueblos; cuando aprecie y ame ya todo lo que hoy aborrece o desconoce; cuando sea, en fin, una nación culta, civilizada, cristiana, amiga de la Humanidad, se diga por la raza que lo habite que en el año de 1860 pasó por aquí [se refiere a Tetuán] un Ejército de Españoles.

Para inmortalizar las campañas militares españolas en Tetuán (ciudad situada al noroeste de Marruecos) de las que habla Alarcón se designó a Mariano Fortuny y Marsal como cronista gráfico de la guerra encargado de acompañar a las tropas. Sin embargo, en los libros de historia del arte, Fortuny figura como un pintor-grabador de educación artística barcelonesa cuya estancia en Marruecos decidió en gran parte la dirección de su arte. Sus tablas, lienzos, acuarelas, aguafuertes y grabados de temática oriental (zocos, callejas, tipos, oficios, etc) que marcan la cima de su expresión artística son leídos y celebrados en la mejor tradición estetizante (vid. por ejemplo Antonio G. Gallego 1990: 395–7). La siguiente descripción sintética del "africanismo" de Fortuny por parte de E. Lafuente Ferrari enfoca eficazmente la problemática aquí aludida:

> „[Fortuny] halla en Africa esplendidos motivos de lo que el busca: luz deslumbradora, orgia de color, asuntos pintorescos que el fogoso dibujante y prodigioso acuarelista va registrando como documentación para obras futuras. Como a Delacroix, este próximo Oriente le ha conquistado: el esplendor exótico del mundo musulmán, los zocos, los tipos, los caballos, los pintorescos atractivos de una vida remota y llena de color apareceran [...] una y otra vez en su obra" (1953: pp. 493–4)

O sea, no se menciona en absoluto la ideología que inspiraba (o motivaba) el arte de Fortuny. Jacques Foucart por su parte calificaría a Fortuny en *L'Orient en question: 1825–1875*, (VV.AA. 1975: 15) de "un bel orientaliste". Mientras que el pintor orientalista francés H. Regnault (Ferrari 1953: 497) lo consideraba como "el maestro de todos". Si bien es cierto que Fortuny no llegó a terminar el cuadro que había de representar la "Expugnación del campamento marroquí [en Tetuán] el 4 de febrero de 1960" (acontecimiento al que se refería Alarcón más arriba), y por consiguiente no podemos hacer más que leer en su intención de hacerlo su adherencia *a priori* (pues estaba dispuesto a pintar el cuadro en cuestión) a la ideología colonial, sí contamos con numerosas obras consumadas, tales "Família marroquí", "El Árabe velando el cuerpo de su amigo", "Cabileño muerto" o "Tánger", que llevan el sello pintoresco típico de la fantasía orientalista: un mundo ajeno que implica expansionismo territorial, un espacio soñado hospedando formas de vida exótica, pero por encima de todo está el "otro" oriental que sirve de referencia para la reafirmación del y" occidental. Siguiendo una curiosa estrategia orientalista, el artista recurre a la autoexclusión para reafirmar su superioridad al "oriental" acentuando de esa manera la distancia entre el occidental que observa y el oriental objeto de observación (L. Nochlin 1991: 37). Lo que explica que nunca se encuentre un rostro occidental, una presencia europea en los cuadros de pintores como Fortuny.

El resto de artistas que componen la escuela orientalista española, entre los cuales se encuentran Olegario Junyent, Sorolla, Mariano Bertuchi, Cruz Herrera y Gabriel Morcilla continuarían en esa línea, produciendo un arte reductivo, que reduce a los marroquíes a tipos

generales cuya estereotipada conducta no deja espacio para las individualidades. Desde un punto de vista histórico-crítico, la situación urge revisitar este género de obras artísticas para reconstruir su sentido y sus valores. Para ello, es absolutamente necesaria la disposición de profesores, historiadores y críticos de arte, galeristas y curadores de muestras para crear un horizonte epistémico y metódico destinado a "descolonizar" la cultura a partir del respeto al "otro". El museo, el aula, la galería son medios fundamentales en la instrucción pública. A través del arte, la selección y catalogación de cuadros, interpretación, contextualización histórica, etc, los responsables pasan a los espectadores/alumnos valores éticos, ideas políticas, un bagaje cultural que fluye e influye en la cultura de la nación. Este tema lo ha abordado convincemente T. Bennett en un reciente artículo (1996).

La retórica verbal de los viajeros españoles que visitaron Marruecos, como ya hemos podido comprobar con Alarcón, es menos metafórica o elusiva que la utilizada por los pintores, aunque en la práctica las dos son variaciones de una y la misma retórica de la dominación. A partir de la primera guerra de Africa en 1959–60, florece en España la producción bibliográfica sobre Marruecos, gracias sobre todo a los escritos de militares (M. Marín 1996: 96). Los casos de viajeros como José María de Murga (1827–1876) o Cristóbal Benítez que se trasladaron a Marruecos impulsados por el gusto de la aventura y la búsqueda de lo exótico son muy aislados (Idem. pp. 95–6). Pero no por ello debemos interpretar la motivación de estos viajeros y sus escritos en una clave puramente anecdótica (la destinación escogida y las observaciones producidas en sus escritos reflejan una mentalidad colonial), pues el lenguaje en que escriben sobre Marruecos y los marroquíes nos revela una mentalidad básicamente eurocentrista.

Los militares, con sus ideales patrióticos y su obsesión con el detalle y la geografía, son, con toda probabilidad, los que más contribuyeron al proceso de la colonización de Marruecos. Destacan entre ellos el comandante de artillería Joaquín Gatell y Folch (1826–1879) que publicó sus primeros textos en 1862, el coronel de artillería Teodoro Bermúdez Reina, autor de 'Geografía militar de Marruecos', el oficial de ingenieros Julio Cervera Baviera que escribió su

propia 'Geografía militar de Marruecos' y el coronel médico Francisco Triviño Valdívia, autor de 'Del Marruecos español'. Por su parte, los "científicos" españoles –más activos que los "arabistas" pero menos que sus homólogos franceses– entregaban al estado español información vital catalogada y clasificada acerca de los marroquíes que facilitaba el dominio de estos últimos. Me pregunto a este punto si la comunidad científica española relaciona alguna vez, cuando es el caso de hacerlo, a científicos como el naturalista Fernando Amor, o el etnógrafo Constantino Bernaldo de Quirós o el médico Felipe Ovilo y Canales con esta realidad histórica.

En general, una acción expansionista se beneficia de la palabra más que de la imagen para ocupar a un país o controlar a un pueblo. En este sentido, las palabras de Alarcón son menos sutiles y por lo tanto más eficaces que los cuadros de Fortuny. También con la palabra se implicaron en la acción expansionista española periodistas menos literarios que Alarcón, corresponsales de guerra que se dedicaban a informar y desinformar a los españoles desde opciones ideológicas imperialistas. Sería interesante indagar sobre la "carga" ideológica de escritores tan famosos y venerados como Galdós o Isaac Muñoz. Su literatura, o parte de ella al menos, parece seguir la linea "orientalista" trazada por Alarcón.

Más de un siglo después, regresamos a la misma zona geográfica de Marruecos para visitar a Paul Bowles en Tánger. Bowles (1910–1999) se trasladó desde Nueva York, su ciudad natal, a Tánger en 1947 y en esta ciudad vivió hasta su muerte. Personaje eccéntrico y recluido, Bowles era conocido entre sus seguidores como compositor musical y escritor, pero muchos le han descubierto gracias a la película de Bernardo Bertolucci *The Sheltering Sky* (El cielo protector) basada en su primera novela (publicada en 1949) que lleva el mismo título. Como observador de P. Bowles, de sus escritos y de reportajes (televisivos) sobre él, tengo la impresión de que a este personaje semipúblico, cuya experiencia de ciudadano occidental residente en Oriente es única, considera la *intelligentsia* occidental en cierto modo como un experimento, como una especie de espejo que refleja el contacto civil y civilizatorio entre Oriente y Occidente en lo que a modos de vivir y producir cultura se refiere. Se trata de una visión ahistórica que hace de Bowles una clase de místico

secular ideológicamente benigno en la tierra de Alá. ¿Pero resistirá este retrato de Bowles a una lectura más o menos desmitificadora? Para comprobarlo, exploraré brevemente algunas representaciones de la alteridad construidas por Bowles para identificar a Marruecos y a los marroquíes.

The Spider's House (1955) es probablemente la obra más "política" de Bowles. Si bien no se trata de una formula absoluta, pero intentar en el contexto de las relaciones Oriente / Occidente separar discurso artístico y política es, como sabemos, una forma clásica de hacer política orientalista. En el caso de Bowles, se trata de una política "proteccionista" que trata de preservar la "magia" que él ha encontrado en un país como Marruecos. Los eventos de *The Spider's House* transcurren en el Marruecos de los primeros años cincuenta. La crisis histórica de estos años -particularmente los violentos incidentes del verano de 1954- cuando tienen lugar arrestos masivos, actos de represión y fusilamientos para apagar las protestas populares contra la presencia colonial francesa en Marruecos, sirve de contexto a la novela.

The Spider's House no oculta la hostilidad del prtagonista Stenham, que es la máscara perfecta de Bowles, hacia las fuerzas de ocupación; pero es una hostilidad que afecta también a los nacionalistas que luchaban por la independencia de Marruecos. Como lectores, nos percatamos pronto de que lo que le interesa a Bowles no es ni condenar al agresor occidental ni solidarizarse con las víctimas de la agresión. Su profunda indignación, típica por lo demás en los estetas orientalistas, emana más bien de su temor de que Marruecos vaya a dejar de ser el espacio exótico y primitivo que es en la fantasía de Bowles. Dice el narrador en la novela:

> Si el [Stenham] por ejemplo deploraba la violencia [...] no era, evidentemente, porque sentía piedad por las víctimas (...), sino porque cada uno de esos eventos sangrientos, al despertar la conciencia de los supervivientes, llevaba a la cultura moribunda hacia su fin. (p. 218)

El mismo Stenham sostiene que "las personas pueden ser sustituidas, pero las obras de arte no". (p.219)

No concuerdo con Viviane Michel (1996: 195) al interpretar la actitud cínicamente egoísta de Stenham como un reflejo del pesimismo de Bowles. En realidad, la posición de este autor es más ideológica que filosófica, orientalista más que sintomático-personal, porque anda claramente a la búsqueda de firmes apoyaturas estético-exóticas. Lo demuestra su análisis de la situación política, su conclusión de que la lucha de los nacionalistas por la independencia no hace otro que generar caos y confusión, lo que perturba el status quo cuyo decoro gusta tanto a Stenham. Tampoco se salvarían el status quo y el decoro con la independencia de Marruecos, porque, en opinión de Bowles, la modernización lo alteraría todo, y para siempre.

Oriente como espacio nunca atrajo a los occidentales por sus habitantes, sino por su decoro natural o "primitivo". Los llamados "indígenas" han sido siempre una incomodidad local, que ha llegado a tener una función muy precisa: la mujer, sin saberlo claramente, ha posado como objeto sexual, como una presencia erótica, y el hombre ha representado el modelo humano contrario al occidental. Silenciados los "indígenas", Oriente se parece a un desierto. Una de las expresiones favoritas de P. Bowles es "le baptême de la solitude", que da también título a uno de sus relatos de viajes. Bowles define esta sensación profunda que experimentó visitando el Sahara como el bautizo que recibe el visitante de manos de este espacio absoluto en su luminosidad y su silencio que es el desierto (1993: 571–581). Bowles piensa que los occidentales, él incluido, escapan de Occidente porque quieren encontrar la nada, un espacio contrario a Nueva York por ejemplo. Y yo me pregunto: si el objetivo de esta gente es el de genuinamente mudar de la metrópolis a la nada, porqué optan por Tánger o el Sahara en vez del desierto de Nevada o Arizona, o el Gran Canyon? De todas formas, la frustración de Bowles de ver el exótico silencio interrumpido por la omnipresencia de los marroquíes la podemos descubrir leyendo su literatura (Diario, novelas -p.e. *The Sheltering Sky*-, cuentos, autobiografía): los hombres marroquíes son retratados como salvajes, criminales, machistas, ladrones, impostores, atrasados, perezosos y oportunistas. Las mujeres ellas son o prostitutas o brujas o inútiles.

Pero el peor orientalismo de todos es sin duda el orientalismo oriental. Me serviré del novelista y poeta francófono marroquí Tahar Ben Jelloun (premio Goncourt 1987), para ilustrar este punto. El tema principal que mueve la pluma de Ben Jelloun es el sexo. Debo dejar claro que yo no estoy de ninguna manera en contra de que se hable en francés o en otra lengua occidental de la sexualidad en un contexto marroquí u oriental. Mi crítica está dirigida contra el uso orientalista de tradiciones y ritos para crear un mundo exótico e ideologizado. Con las misteriosas historias de los personajes "primitivos" que pululan sus novelas, Ben Jelloun no se propone, como sociólogo que es de formación, la eliminación de tabúes o la reeducación sexual de sus compatriotas. La escritura benjellouniana, que mimetiza mediocremente los textos de las 1001 noches en su versión Gallandiana, acaba transformando al individuo marroquí en un "salvaje noble": salvaje porque requiere ser civilizado y noble porque es patéticamente primitivo.

A mi modo de ver, novelas como *Harrouda* (1973), *La plus haute des solitudes* (1976), *Moha le fou, Moha le sage* (1978) (estas tres son las novelas que M. Boughali1987: pp. 123–42, para demostrar la que él llama la "impostura" de Ben Jelloun), *L'enfant de sable* (1985), *La nuit sacrée* (1987) y *Les yeux baissés* (1991) deben pertenecer a la literatura francesa, no a la marroquí, a la occidental, no a la oriental. Sea como sea, yo no percibo, como hace Robert Elbaz, a Ben Jelloun como un escritor transgresivo (1996: 7–16). Su obra novelística puede pretender inspirarse por la tradición cuentística popular marroquí y tratar de una temática aparentemente tabú en Marruecos, pero Ben Jelloun resulta ser un escritor que vive en Francia y escribe en francés para un público francés. La verdadera transgresión se materializa cuando el transgresor se confronta al objeto de su transgresión sobre el terreno de lo transgredido. La considerable distancia física e intelectual que hay entre Ben Jelloun y el complejo universo cultural marroquí no permite que una semejante confrontación tenga lugar. Con lo cual el lector no encontrará ninguna diferencia a nivel de discurso entre un escritor orientalista de orígen francés y un oriental afrancesado como Ben Jelloun.

Atribuir actitudes culturales negativas al Islam, describir al hombre norteafricano, y africano en general, como una bestia sexual-

mente insaciable que hay que controlar por la fuerza, sustituir las tradiciones locales por un *modus vivendi* occidental, pretender liberar las mentes indígenas liberalizando su forma de pensar son algunas de las estrategias y clichés que el aparato de propaganda francés utilizaba en Norteáfrica. Es lo que reflejan, entre otras referencias, algunos escritos de F. Fanon, el cual, basándose sobre su experiencia de psiquiatra, quiso valorar de cerca el papel de la política sexual llevada a cabo por los franceses en Argelia. En *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* (1952) y *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Fanon teoriza sobre el colonialismo mediante una lectura analítica de sus estrategias, sus objetivos y sus consecuencias, y propone métodos para resistirle.

Haciendo eco del discurso orientalista, Ben Jelloun utiliza el erotismo y el apetito sexual para enfatizar la autoridad del poder masculino sobre la desnudez femenina en un contexto de fantasía que alimenta la confusión entre folklore e Islam, entre conducta individual y paradigma etnográfico, entre el Marruecos inventado por la imaginación colonial y el Marruecos histórico. El de Ben Jelloun es en definitiva un discurso que garantiza al lector occidental una *jouissance* barthesiana digna de la mejor tradición neo-orientalista.

Quisiera terminar diciendo que estoy consciente de que esta lectura de algunas manifestaciones del discurso orientalista es fragmentaria y, por lo tanto, no aspira a ser considerada una lectura definitiva. Siendo así, mi relectura no ha pretendido enfocar a Oriente como discurso en el discurso de Occidente para reducirlo o simplificarlo. Lo que sí he intentado hacer desde un punto de vista estrictamente humanista ha sido señalar ciertas "anomalías" en las presentes lecturas del discurso en cuestión mediante posibles interpretaciones alternativas. En realidad, lo ideal sería que todos los que trabajamos en Humanidades contribuyeramos en una relectura vasta e interdisciplinar de las mismas para hacer que sean humanitarias en el sentido verdaderamente universal de la palabra.

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Paradise Lost:
Story and History in Identity Building

MONICA SPIRIDON

> It is said that in those days [in early twentieth century] one could hear seventy languages in the streets of Istanbul. The vast Ottoman Empire, shrunken and weakened though it now was, had made it normal and natural for Greeks to inhabit Egypt, Persians to settle in Arabia and Albanians to live with Slavs. Christians and Muslims of all sects, Alevis, Zoroastrians, Jews, worshippers of the Peacock Angel, subsisted side by side, and in most improbable places and combinations.
>
> There were Muslim Greeks, Catholic Armenians, Arab Christians and Serbian Jews. Istanbul was the hub of this broken-felloed wheel, and there could be found epitomized the fantastical bedlam and Babel, which no one realized at the time, was destined to be the model and precursor of all the world great metropoles a hundred year hence, by which time Istanbul itself would, paradoxically, have lost its cosmopolitan brilliance entirely.
>
> It would be destined, perhaps, one day to find it again, if only the devilish false idols of nationalism, that specious patriotism of the morally stunted, might finally be toppled, in the century to come. (Bernières 2004: 167)

The above quotation conspicuously introduces one of the controversial stances of the following pages: whilst genuine and "innocent", identity might seem to people or to communities delightful, gratifying and even heavenly. However, a soon as it gets problematized, the Paradise turns into a Hell of doubt, insecurity and feud

between the National Self and the National Others if not between Oneself and Oneself.

I will focus on the particular ways in which communities represent identities in the Post-Ottoman Asia Minor, proceeding from two contemporary novels published almost simultaneously: *Birds without Wings*, by the British novelist Louis de Bernières and *Middlesex*, by the American Jeffrey Eugenides, winner of the 2003 Pulitzer prize for fiction. Both writers call into question the very logic of identification, following the build up of Turkish and of Greek identities in a process of mutual mirroring. This thorny process also implies complex and sometimes painful activities of representation, as well as sophisticated strategies of converting these representations into discourse or, to put it differently, of turning History into Story.

In the wake of the First World War, following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the ethnically, religiously and linguistically miscellaneous Anatolian communities faced the same problem: "We ought to know who we are." (Bernières 2004: 542) My text analyses aim to unravel the parallel efforts to defend and to demolish imperial identity, focusing on *nationality building* seen as a discursive and a historical instance. Although in different ways, the two novels revolve around the Byzantine and the Ottoman empires, whose mingled ashes nest blistering national conflict, national self-invention and above all national (Hi)stories.

According to at least one of the many conflicting estimations present in both novels, the Ottoman empire was the cradle of a cultural arch-identity, as one of Bernières' Greek characters steadily maintains: "We are all Ottomans now. Times have changed." Moreover, rephrasing what a different narrator of the same author suggests, this type of identity scenario/ picture might be seen as a latent imperial proto-multiculturalism: "The word Ottoman would fall into disuse and disrepute until such time as the inevitable revisions of later days, when the world would realize that the *Ottoman Empire had been cosmopolitan and tolerant*." (Ib. 607)

In Louis de Bernières' novel, the fictitious paradigm of this heavenly tolerance is Eskibahce, a village of the Anatolian coast, south of Smyrna. As the various narrators of the book repeatedly

point out, in Eskibahce the Christian girl Philothei and the Muslim boy Ibrahim have been betrothed since their childhood; the Greek Mehmetich and the Turkish Karatavouk have always been seen by the community as twin brothers; Father Kristoforos and the imam Abdulamid Hodjea embody a sort of *Ianus bifrons* of moral authority of the place. On top of it, the Muslim mothers occasionally ask their Christian neighbors to get the blessing of the Panagia, represented by an old icon at St. Nicholas local church, and reciprocally in the same church the Christians light their candles and place them in the sand box but then knee down and pray making Muslim prostrations.

In *Middlesex,* only the lavish city of Smyrna, "the most cosmopolitan community in the Middle East" represents the alleged Paradise prior to the National Sin, as depicted by Eugenides. The novelist draws an obvious metaphorical parallel between the mixture of the particular quarters of this city (Greek, Jewish, Armenian, Muslim, French, British etc.) on the one hand, and the harmony of the most varied occidental and oriental strings in local orchestras or of the honey and the rose petals in local sweets, on the other.

The seeds of National difference – by far most obvious in *Middlesex* – are nonetheless present in both novels. In Eskibahce they are emphatically epitomized by Dascalos Leonidas, the Greek schoolmaster who dreams and preaches obsessively about Greater Greece and the *Megale Idea*. In *Middlesex,* a whole community – the village Bythnios located on the slopes of Mount Olympus – seems to be inhabited by clones of Dascalos Leonidas. The so called *Megale Idea*, frequently mentioned in both novels but extensively surveyed in all its aspects and consequences by Eugenides, is obviously an *imperial, post-Ottoman and neo-Byzantine utopian project*: "It was all about reconstructing Byzantium and turning Haghia Sophia back into a cathedral, and bringing about "Greater Greece", and having a King Constantine back on the throne, and the whole caboodle was known as " The Big Idea". (Ib. 258)

Significantly enough, the father of Dascalos Leonidas, a rich Greek merchant, has a more pragmatic vision of the late Ottoman Empire and of its *pros* and *cons*. He has sound reasons to fear his own son's dreams of turning it into a nether world: "Here in Smyrna we have the most pleasant and delightful city in the world. We are all

prosperous. We are in Paradise, and you and your friends want to mess it up with your stupid Big Idea, for God's sake!"(Ib. 259)

A Greek narrator of the same novel, Georgio Theodorou, bitterly adds to the above mentioned, whilst he is slowly sinking in the Aegean Sea: «We, Asia Minor Greeks, were caught between the hot-headed idealists and nationalists who wanted to turn the world upside down in the name of a beautiful vision of Byzantium..."(Ib. 415)

If in Eskibahce Dascalos Leonidas is perceived as extravagant and ridiculous, in Bythinios, the slowly dying Anatolian village of Eugenides, the Big Idea has been for centuries *the Norm*. As all the other members of their shrinking community, the Stephanides, the protagonists of the book, are a consanguine tribe, fiercely resisting any external influence. In Eugenides' novel, the radical ethnic closure has been pushed to its extreme, absurd, outcome: the incest that eventually produces a hermaphrodite baby.

Even after having crossed the Atlantic, the Stephanides clan still cherishes neo-Byzantinism. The family joyfully supports the building in Detroit in the proximity of the Ford highway of a church called Hagia Sophia, intended to resuscitate the old Byzantine splendor. The very last lines of the novel insist on the Byzantine profile of the hermaphrodite Cal(liope). "The Monster" – a label occasionally appended to Cal by a schoolmate – metaphorically accounts for the cultural pathology that has progressively contaminated the Stephanides: ethnical introversion and encapsulation. The ancient forefathers of the Greek clan used to call this type of infatuation "*hubris*" and their Gods severely punished it.

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The moment when, through the door open by the successive local wars in the early twentieth century, History brutally stepped on the front stage of the empire, marks a significant threshold in both novels. In the wake of it, tragic deaths, collective traumas, cold blooded atrocities, cities set on fire, people going mad for ever or radically changing for worse, everlasting physical or spiritual wounds spread over in the formerly idyllic landscape.

There is an "on duty" Armenian in both novels: a Philobosian doctor in Smyrna, who had cured Mustafa Kemal himself of a severe disease a few years earlier, and a Levonian apothecary in Eskibahce. The two not only loose their homes and their homeland but also their entire families are murdered. The shrewd Greek narrator Giorgio Theodorou, is drowned in the great fire of Smyrna trying to get aboard a British ship. The brother and sister Lefty and Desdemona manage to board a French ship and are hastily married whilst they cross the Atlantic, trying to escape the collective nightmare that engulfs everything around them. The couple of teenagers in love, Philotei and Ibrahim also become the victims of the identity turmoil: the Greek Juliet tragically dies and the Muslim Romeo goes mad. Although surviving a series of successive wars, Ibrahim's friend, Karatavouk, eventually becomes "his own ghost", to quote him.

In the backstage of these individual dramas, huge crowds of uprooted people are rambling all over continental and insular Greece, European Turkey, coastal or inland Anatolia, in quest for a new homeland and for *a brand-new name*.

Under the circumstances, distinct National identities, able to replace the generic communities of the agonizing empire, need to be engineered swiftly. "Crafting a sense of Self takes place, not only with reference to a set of defining questions and moral aspirations, but also with reference to Others, as a "defining community". This is why "identity is a fundamentally relational", as Ulrike Meinhoff maintains. (Meinhoff 2002: 18)

On the one hand, Turkey is being brought to geo-political life, as the narrator named Karatavouk concludes: "The war caused Turkey to be born out of the empire, which was mother of it, and gave birth to it as it lay dying." (Bernières 2004: 331) On the other, giving up the utopian Big Idea, Greece has to assume a more realistic role to play on the new historical stage: "We knew that our Christians were sometimes called Greeks, although we often called them "dogs" or "infidels", but in a manner that was a formality, or said with a smile, just as were their deprecatory terms for us. Be that it may, one day we discovered that actually existed a country called Greece." (Ib. 4)

Even if in our time ethnic stamps such as "Turkish" and "Greek" have for a longtime become "mere national labels", in early

twentieth century they were not easy to pinpoint or to be accepted. To the ordinary post-Ottoman people, such branding did not seem "natural" at all. In order to be accepted they had to be well explained and suitably justified: "An interesting thing happens, however; whereas the word "Turkey" has been in common usage for centuries in countries outside the Ottoman Empire, it is now used for the first time in an official document in Istanbul. The use of the word [Turk] signifies that the Turks are beginning to see themselves as the inhabitants of the Anatolian heartland. They are losing their affinity with their co-religionists in Arabia, or anyway else in the former empire. When "Turkey" becomes a word used by Turks, it really means the end of the pan-Islamic dream of Muslim idealists, a fantasy as fantastic as the Greek dream of Greater Greece." (Ib. 473)

Images of Alterity usually arise by calling attention to daily routine behavior, public manners, food habits, outfits etc. and become the ready-made linguistic formulae called "stereotypes". Stereotypes emerge in particular areas of group identities, as ideological products articulated through collective representation. Coining stereotype representations of Oneself and of the Other is a complex process that fosters a whole range of both top-down and bottom-up symbolic projections.

Consequently, in both novels, being just "Turkish" or "Greek" is not an easy job. Mustafa Kemal, as a military commander in chief, is the first one (habilitated) to instruct his army in this respect. Later on, the former soldiers are bound to disseminate his teaching for the benefit of the perplexed local communities. Kemal's herald along the post-ottoman Anatolian coast, for instance, is a "sergeant Osman": the living emblem of the new Turkish authority. Whilst in charge of collecting the Christian population of the place and marching it to Telmessos, in order to be transferred by ships to Greece, the sergeant has a tough time instructing the folks that: "From now on you are Greeks, not Ottomans. And we are not Ottomans any more either, we are Turks" and answering puzzling questions such as: "Where is Greece?" or "Are the Greeks Ottomans like us"? (Ib. 527)

A long and painful age of despondent conversion precludes the process of nationality building: "Certainly, it was to Greece that they had been deported – are we being instructed referring to the former

Anatolian Christians – and they become Greeks, whether they wanted it or not, even if their new compatriots often deprecated them as Turks." (Ib. 607)

In this era of adjustment, various types of *identity-brands* emerged on the market. Among the transitory cultural trademarks was *"Cretan"*, for instance, referring to the Turkish population displaced from Crete and relocated in Asia Minor. Mixed rumors about them circulated across the former empire. From a letter sent by a native Turk to his Greek deported friend, we learn that they longed for their old home, continued to cook, have fun and dance in a Christian way and also that "they have learned Turkish, especially the children, but sometimes they still *use Greek language."* (Ib. 607)

Filthy-Turk (or occasionally *Dirty Turk*) also runs as identity currency in Continental Greece, Rhodes or Cephalonia, where the deported Greeks move in quest of their ethnic roots: "Of course the irony is that the [Greek relatives] Drapanitikos family thought we were just *dirty Turks*." (Ib. 541)

"Byzantine" is a similar trademark on the list. In *Middlesex*, this deprecatory label is used by the British congregation in Smyrna, to gratify both sides of an ethnic feud in which they do not wish to be trapped. A long time after the Post-Ottoman ethnic clashes, this is also the name occasionally used by some of the earlier Greek settlers to "welcome" the Stephanides across the Atlantic. Lefty Stepahnides, for instance, is more than once being identified as *Byzantine*, even by his off springs to typify his look or his behavior.

Some of these emerging "identity brands" are simply oxymoronic, although only apparently paradoxical, such as the polar couple: *Greek Turks* and reciprocally *Turkish Greek*: "Eskibahce was dying on its feet because not enough Greek Turks to fill the empty houses of the Turkish Greeks..." wisely concludes an inhabitant of the area. (Ib. 607)

It is widely accepted that stereotypes are highly selective systems of shared explanations and also that they form in order to enable action. (McGarthy, Yzerbyt and Spears 2002: 13) In this perspective, the most striking aspect of the identity stereotypes circulated by the two novels is that they don't explain anything, nor do they enable action. On the contrary, they successfully generate confusion and

block any desire to be or to act. We may say that post-ottoman History (re)converted them into *disabled categorizing instruments*: a sort of "counter-stereotypes."

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According to Stuart Hall, identities are constituted "through the reiterative power of discourse *to produce that which also name and regulate*. Identity, Hall goes on, is not an essentialist, but a strategic and a positional category, never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions." (Hall 1996: 4) Following the same line of argument, W. L. Randall elaborates on the idea that at the very core of identity there is an essential level that should be called "narrative identity". It consists of: "stories we tell to ourselves about ourselves and the stories we or others tell to others, or stories that are told to others about ourselves – all the stories in which we are included" (Randall 1995: 54–56) When literary forged identities are subjects of debate, this kernel level needs to be approached in terms of "narrative point of view" (focalization) and of "narrative voice". In this respect, it seems that the distance between two novels in question is as large as the gap between narrative "homophony" and narrative "polyphony". More precisely, *Middlesex* is *homophonic*: a novel ascribed to a single-string voice that dispatches information and assumes full narrative responsibility from the first to the last line of the novel. On the contrary, Bernieres' *polyphonic* narrative recipe relies on multiple, ill assorted voices and points of view. However, on a closer cross-examination the narrative picture of both texts significantly changes.

In *Birds Without Wings,* an all-embracing focalization belongs to Mustafa Kemal, the engineer of the Post-Ottoman Turkish identity and the main geo-political strategist of the area. It is he who constantly makes identity options, decides on the name of *Turkish* for his newborn nation and on the limited part to be played by religion in outlining it. Nonetheless, a real narrative voice is not allotted to Mustafa Kemal. His values, his point of view and his options are carried out by an impersonal third person discourse, very

close to the insight of a practiced historian. To put differently, History herself seems to be the official Spokesperson of Mustafa Kemal.

A manifold interplay occur between this top level and the lower levels, narratively handled by Ibrahim the potter of Eskibahce, by the Greek Juliet named Philotei, by her friend Drousula, by the Greek tradesman Giorgio Theodorou and, most frequently, by the Muslim boy Karatavouk, the potter's son. As he starts writing letters from various imperial battlefields and he goes on sharing his views with a miscellaneous audience, including us the readers, Karatavouk's perspective slowly but steadily changes. The more extensive and skilled his craft of oral or written storytelling becomes, the more substantial and tangled looks the History of the area, as recounted by him. By the end of the novel, Karatavouk seems to be the only character aware of Who he was? Who he had become? How this had happened? and ready to get to terms with all these questions.

We should also notice that in Bernières' novel, Mustafa Kemal embodies a *top-down* narrative perspective, since this is – more or less successfully – being passed on to the others by low-profile agents such as sergeant Osman. On the contrary, Karatavouk's narrative craft illustrates a *bottom-up* dynamics, getting progressively closer (although never identical) to that of Mustafa Kemal.

In Eugenides' fictitious universe, the monopoly of (Hi)story telling formally belongs to Cal(liope): the hermaphrodite Stephanides' off spring, However, the reader is constantly presented with indubitable evidence that Cal represents in fact *a generic homonymy,* disguising a polyphony of points of view, interpretations and narrative devices if not a whole bunch of distinct identities. The novel maps out Cal's biographical and cultural route from a shy and irresolute teenager, trapped in an ethnically encapsulated Post-Ottoman clan to a fully-fledged, outspoken individual, handling the all encompassing and rich perspective of a "self-reflecting Homer". (In the novel the references to Homer are explicit and accompanied by famous quotations from his epic.)

Considered in the theatrical meaning of the term, Cal's narrative "performance", can also be seen as the price claimed by History for the family's identity *hubris*. Nonetheless there is a big collateral gain

from this ordeal: it endows Eugenides' character with the dignified status of a Homer ingeniously doubled by a Narcissus. By deliberately taking on the parts of such mythical emblems on the historical contemporary stage, Cal symbolically comes to terms with a (both biological and cultural) overloaded heredity and reaches the so called *catharsis* promised by the Greek ancient drama.

Astutely self-referential, Eugenides' novel focuses on the very process of crafting identity through intermingled, top-down and bottom-up, story telling and finally through story-writing strategies. Changing ages, locations, jobs, social statuses and even sex, the official narrator of his novel successively assesses various writing options: first a simple pen, to bring about a medical confession; later on, a Smith Corona typewriter to create a series of auto-biographies, drawing closer and closer to self-invention; and finally a modern copy-editing device to help concoct a manuscript called... *Middlesex*.

A few concluding remarks

The feverish and overflowing identity projections related to the vast stage of the Post-Imperial Balkans have been the object of many insightful approaches, among which at least those published by Vesna Goldsworthy, Larry Wolff or Maria Todorova are notable. However we should keep in mind that the common denominator of such scholarly contributions is the perception and the cultural projection of a *generic Balkan identity.*

As regards the two novelists in question, they draw attention to a different dimension of the Balkan identity building, following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire: the inner and sometimes "innocent" perspective of the victims caught up in this process and their fervent yearning for dealing with it by oral or written accounts. Beyond their differences, both Bernières and Eugenides endorse Charles Taylor's allegation that in order to get a "sense of Who we are" we need: "to have a notion of how we have become, and of where we are going: we grasp a sense of our lives and of our identity *in a narrative*." (Taylor 1989: 47)

Subsequently, the text above analysis is focused on identity building as a manifold historical and discursive instance, pointing to the relationship between Self-identifying and Stereotypical representations of the Other, to the crisscrossing of inside and outside literary projections triggered off by identification and to the narrative devices that foster a whole range of both top-down and bottom-up processes of symbolic projection.

Maybe the arch-morale of the two fictitious fables is that identity is never merely "packaged" but decisively crafted by narrative discourse. Who you are, who you were and who you progressively or suddenly became depends in crucial ways on how, to whom and when you told about your personal clash with History, turning it into Story.

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About the Meaning of Estonian Literature

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The answer to the question about the meaning[1] of Estonian literature presumes actually answers to three sub-questions. Firstly, what kind of role has Estonian literature had in reflecting (Estonian historical) reality? Secondly, what kind of role has Estonian literature had in shaping the collective intellectual world of Estonians (literary myths, narratives, symbols)? And thirdly, what role has Estonian literature had in the Estonian society, i.e. what is the position of literature and how has it influenced the development of the Estonian society?

In the search for the above-mentioned meanings, one detail should be specified and some presumptions formulated. The specification concerns the collocation "Estonian literature". It is regarded as something average, which content is identified by a dominant feature (an element of enlightenment, social pedagogic, national policy, aesthesis, dissidentism, etc) during certain period. By this I admit the fact that during different periods different sets of texts (textualities) have been regarded as "literature", denoting the fact that "the limits of literature have changed during history" and "during different periods of time literature has comprised different sub-literatures" (Hennoste 2003: 1064).

[1] The term "meaning" is defined here pursuant to Juri Lotman's definition: "The main question of cultural semiotics is the issue of emerging meaning. The emergence of meaning is a phenomenon, in which culture as one entity or its separate parts have the ability to dispense non-trivial new texts compared to the "output". New texts are texts, which emerge as the result of irreversible processes (term by Ilya Prigogine), i.e. texts, which are to some extent unpredictable." (Lotman 1999: 41)

As a matter of fact, so it is. Although the following discourse about the meaning of Estonian literature does not expose those sub-literatures adequately enough (and it is not exposed in the historical periodisation of Estonian literature). There are two reasons for that. Firstly, the meaning of an object or a phenomenon (semiotics), i.e. its aptitude to serve as a sign depends on how well the phenomenon is projected in its "particularity as a constructor" (Materjaly 1999: 91), which does not necessarily apply to sub-literatures. Secondly, this "particularity" in its turn is identified when the creator's (author) and the reader' s expectation horizons coincide or collide reciprocally.

"The meaning of Estonian literature" expresses the **communicative relationship** between the contemporary creators and readers, critics and experts of the history of literature and between the creators and readers of the new generation. This relationship is intrinsically polylogical, in which literary phenomena like consolidating substance creating new stars starts to represent the "particularity" and arrange the rest of the (literary) communication.

The presumptions for the present discussion are supported with the following statements. Firstly, Estonian literature will be observed on the background of the entire writing culture of Estonia, meaning that also the texts supporting the creation of writing culture are included. The second presumption regards "folklore", a phenomenon dating back to the pre-literary period, as verbal tradition. Folklore cannot categorically be regarded as verbal literature – being *contradictio in adjecto* (verbal *versus* written) – but folklore acquires the status of literature depending on the fact how much of it is recorded and "discovered" by literature. The third presumption lies in the interpreter's attitude toward the text(s). H.–G. Gadamer has stated that "a text is much more than a nomination of the object field in literary research" and its interpretation is nothing else than "i n s e r t i o n of meaning and not the d i s c o v e r y of meaning" (Gadamer 2002: 250, 253). This "insertion" is also an option, bringing out one text on the general background, provisional separation from the context, which in its turn guides us to the recognition of value in the meaning as Roland Barthes has emphasised it in *Mythologies*, indicating to the inherent affinity of the meaning, the myth and the language (Barthes 2004: 243–251).

The fourth presumption concerns the relationship of Estonian literature with the world literature. This is an issue of national and supranational literature. In minor languages, with the number of speakers a bit over one million as in Estonia, literature is more a national issue than the issue of (world) literary history. The literature of a small nation serves the nation while constantly fighting for its existence. Therefore, we have to agree with Milan Kundera saying, "a small nation instils in the writer the conviction that he belongs only to homeland." (Kundera 2007: 4). The dimension of world literature in comparison to the literature of a small nation is constituted more in loans and adaptations, and also the history of Estonian literature cannot present any writer, whose creative work is recognised on the scale of the world classics. The meaning of Estonian literature is inevitably confined only to the limits of the Estonian literature itself.

Hence the question: what kind of meaning has the Estonian literature had on the reflection of the (historical) reality in Estonia?

With some pathos we may state that Estonia and Estonians recorded themselves in history thanks to the *Chronicles of Henrik the Lett,* who used the Estonian territory and Estonians as characters in his *Livonian Chronicles* (*Henrici Chronicon Livoniae*, 1227). Both – the *Chronicles of Henrik the Lett* and *the Livonian Chronicle* (1584) by Balthasar Russow belong to the period prior to Estonian literature. When Henrik's chronicle describes Estonians mainly negatively (barbarous, inflexible savages), Russow's chronicle already exhibits some compassion toward the common people, mainly peasants or craftsmen.

Estonia and its people reflected in the chronicles are naturally hypothetical if not fictional. Thus, the historical implications can only be provisional. That creates possibilities for various "re-mixes" and interpretations. On one hand, in the Estonian culture the chronicles have become the arguments of historical auto-mythology. For example, in the 19th century one of the leaders of the national awakening movement Carl Robert Jakobson interpreted in his first "patriotic speech" "savagery", described in the Livonian Chronicles of *Henrik the Lett,* as bravery (Jakobson 1959: 288). But on the other hand the chronicles have become the subject matter of literature

itself. The subsequent historical Estonian prose focuses either on the herofication of the ancient fight for freedom in Estonia or on the people's struggle for rights and freedom. Namely, the latter is altered after Eduard Vilde published his trilogy *Mahtra sõda (The War of Mahtra)*, 1902, *Kui Anija mehed Tallinnas käisid (When Men from Anija Went to Tallinn)*, 1903, and *Prohvet Maltsvet (Prophet Maltsvet)*, 1905. The trilogy combines elements of critical realism and romantic depiction of life at that time. The reflection of the period and the reality approach factual events but culminates in fictional, even symbolic generalisation, in the characters and their interpersonal relationships. Critical realism and naturalist key, used to describe life in Estonia in the novels by Eduard Vilde (e.g. *Külmale maale (To the Cold Land)*, 1896), and in the dramas by August Kitzberg (*Tuulte pöörises (In the Whirlpool of Winds)*, 1906, *Libahunt*, 1911 and *Kauka Jumal (The Lord of Pouch)*, 1912 is passed on into the literary work of several other writers. Heroism – although trammelled by the framework of the Soviet propaganda – may be observed in prose with the so-called revolutionary subject matter (novels by Rudolf Sirge and Aadu Hint).

The generalisation of life philosophy of the Estonians is accomplished in the literary work of Anton Hansen Tammsaare. Karl Ristikivi continued the same trend in his Tallinn novels. At the end of the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st century Tammsaares's existentialist discourse was continued in the novels and storied about the outstanding people in Estonian history and culture written by Mats Traat and Jaan Kross. Kross's novels are kind of holograms in Estonian history. The main question Kross asks his reader is: how a small nation can survive in between the gear wheel of history, what is its ethical price. In his novel *Wikmani poised (Wikman's Boys)*, 1988 and *Paigallend (Treading Air)*, 1998 (in English 2006) Kross handles the question and reaches the Estonian reality of 1930s. Ullo Paerand – the protagonist of *Treading Air* symbolises the fate of many Estonian men – respectful withdrawal – in Estonian history.

The reality of Estonian life after WW II (foundation of state farms, which caused the destruction and decline of the village community) is depicted in the novel *Tondiöömaja (Ghost Staying for*

the Night), 1970 by Heino Kiik. Due to censorship the book reached the readers through great difficulties. The same period is recorded through the eyes of a child, written by Viivi Luik in the novel *Seitsmes rahukevd (The Seventh Spring of Peace,)* 1985 and by Jaan Kruusvall in *Pilvede värvid (Colours of the Clouds),* 1983.

In reflecting contemporary life, Estonian literature has depended either on the dominating method (e.g. descriptive realism in the work of Ernst Peterson-Särgava or in Juhan Liiv's prose or impressionism and expressionism in the literary work of Friedebert Tuglas and August Gailit at the beginning of the 20th century) or on the withdrawal from reality by the means of irony or other alienation mechanism (e.g. Tammsaare's sarcasm in his novel *Elu ja armastus (Life and Love)*, 1934, comedies by Hugo Raudsepp). The depiction of life becomes especially playful and is based on the alienation effect and irony in the prose of the 1960s (Enn Vetemaa, Arvo Valton, Mati Unt).

Anyway, it has to be admitted that Estonian reality is revealed in the historical memory primarily as literature. One reason seems to be the absence of objective, i.e. of the engaged historical recording tradition. The microhistory and history of mentality of Estonia and Estonians is clearly of "literary" origin, being put together of reminiscences, travel descriptions, interpretations of folk tradition like a mosaic.

The "literary" origin of Estonian history has had a substantial impact on the creation of the Estonian national myth and the formation of the entire intellectual life. The first national heroes were writers (many of them were also teachers, parish clerks, penmen – a category of people know as the "salt of the soil") whose teachings, introduced and amplified images formed the entire rhetoric network, on which the historical and social consciousness of Estonians was founded.

The first of the *Three Patriotic Speeches* by Carl Robert Jakobson, performed on October 6 1868, *About the period of light, darkness and dawn for the Estonian people* lay a manichaeistic basis for the belief that Estonians as a nation have had a rich history and will have a definite future (Undusk 1997: 733). Being a religious man Jakobson suggestively stated that "ancient Estonians were very rich and knowledgeable". (Jakobson 1959: 299). Jakobson also

created the so-called "language faith", that united Estonian literature and the being of an Estonian, expressed by Kristian Jaak Peterson, an Estonian student in Tartu University, in his poem *Kuu (The Moon)* already in 1819. Peterson's rhetorical question:" "Kas siis selle maa keel ei või laulutules taevani tõustes üles omale igavikku otsida? (May the language of this country not rise to the heaven in the fire of the song to find itself in eternity?)" is one among many mythological literary collocations that makes the heart of an Estonian thump happily even today.

"I consider the language a piece of art – like anything else might be," states Jakobson, as a genuine linguist in an aesthetic mood (Jakobson 1959: 293), the idea was used about forty years later by one of leaders of Noor-Eesti cultural movement Johannes Aavik, a devoted follower of Benedetto Croce.

Carl Robert Jakobson sees the greatness of the Estonian language in the fact that already Friedrich Robert Faehlmann, who started, and Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald, who finalised our national epic *Kalevipoeg,* indicated to its epical and imagery power. The mythological world of *Kalevipoeg,* according to Jakobson, was a kind of cosmos and if one language, following its ancient rhythm, enabled to comprise and reproduce something like that, it provided evidence of vitality and intellectual power of the whole nation (Jakobson 1959: 293).

Kreutzwald's epic has been treated as literature, although it applied the form of old Estonian folk song and traditional motifs. Tuglas and even August Annist have reliably confirmed that *Kalevipoeg* was not meant to be the poetic generalisation of Estonian traditions but was rather a programmatic work, the most national and outstanding product of Estonian national romanticism (Annist 2005: 27). *Kalevipoeg* was not the manifestation of folk culture (like *Kalevala* by Elias Lönnrot to the Finnish people) but a sacral phenomenon of high culture (Veidemann 2003: 896). This in its turn has given basis to regard Kalevipoeg as a major European epic and discuss it in the same context as Vergilius' *Aeneid*, *Roland's song* of the French, the Spanish epic *Song about my Cid,* the Germans' *Niebelungs,* and in the context of *Lusiades* by the founder of Portuguese national literature Luís Vaz de Camões (Talvet 2003:

886–887). It was the first outstanding achievement in Estonian literature, although a little bit too far-fetched for common people, it gradually became a textual icon (in many Estonian homes there is a nice leather-bound Kalevipoeg on the book-shelf like a Bible), there is every reason to talk about Estonians as "a literally-minded nation". *Kalevipoeg* has left several narratives in national mythology, which have later started their independent life.

Coming back to C. R. Jakobson's "language faith" and other intellectual leaders of the national awakening movement, it must be mentioned that beside new opportunities for the Estonian language, literature in itself constituted a chance of "re-creation". In the middle of the 19th century and especially at the end of the 19th century literary criticism contained continuous admonitions saying that books written in the Estonian language enrich the language and the primarily writers have to take care of the language. The cultural movement Noor-Eesti amplified namely this aspect: Estonian literature became a kind of laboratory for language experiments. The euphony (good sound) and harmony was one of the criterion by which Tuglas, nicknamed the "pope" of Estonian literature, evaluated the development level and the potential of literature at the beginning of the 20th century.

Estonian literature at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century contributed much to the development of the ideological code system glossary of the Estonian culture and nation (which inseparably interpenetrate each other). For example, Juhan Liiv's poem *Kui tume veel kauaks ka sinu maa (How long will your country be gloomy?)*, the phrase from his story *Vari (Shadow):* "Kui seda metsa ees ei oleks (If only there were no forest afore)", Ernst Enno's poem *Koduigatsus (Homesickness)* and its first line "Nüüd õitsvad kodus valged ristikheinad" (Now white clover is in blossom at home). The above-mentioned Kristian-Jaak Peterson's rhetoric question about the power of the Estonian language, *Kevade (Spring)* – a novel about the Estonian school at the end of the 19th century by Oskar Luts, symbolises the Estonian national childhood.

Anton Hansen Tammsaare's penthalogy *Tõde ja õigus (Truth and Justice)* has acquired the status of a sacral text due to its archetype characters, confrontations, nature and labour descriptions, discus-

sions and set phrases. All these phrases, characters, motifs continued their life beyond the limits of the novel and became the "bricks" in the general construction of the cultural code system, confirmed by multiple literary narratives and mythologemic paradoxes. The most well known of them is the protestant saying: "Tee tööd, siis tuleb ka armastus (If you do a lot of work, you will find love)" by Tammsaare, which has become a kind of understatement in the novel: there has been enough work, but no love. Nevertheless, the first half of the phrase – the obligation –, functions as a positive national thesis.

The Estonian literature after WW II has also been the source of several constructions, textual abstracts, and characters, which have become the components of national self-narrative. Some examples: Juhan Smuul's play *Kihnu Jõnn*, 1964, Paul-Erik Rummo's cycle of poems *Hamleti laulud (Hamlet's Songs)*, 1966, the play *Tuhkatriinumäng (Cinderella Game)*, 1968, Hando Runnel's collections of poems *Avalikud laulud (Public Songs)*, 1970 and *Punaste õhtute purpur (The Crimson of Red Evenings)*, 1982, Jaan Kaplinski's poem *Üks kuningas oli kord maata (Once There Was a King without a Country)*, 1967 and the play *Neljakuningapäev (The Day of Four Kings)*, 1977, Jaan Kross's short story *Pöördtoolitund (The Hour of Swivel Chair)*, 1971 (especially its dramatisation in 1979), etc – all of them emphasise the meaningfulness of literature and have become a part of the national discourse. By this we also have answered the third sub-question about the meaning of Estonian literature: what is the importance of Estonian literature in the Estonian society.

In addition to the creation and re-creation of the Estonian writing and literary culture, Estonian literature has consolidated the Estonian society. We are, that we read. Reading is a triangular process. When reading, we have a dialogue with the writer, the world and the emotional sphere created by the writer. But at the same time we also "read" ourselves via literature (i.e. our prejudices, attitudes, experience) and relate to other people. Therefore, reading literature is not only a contact with the language but also social cohesion. This tendency stands out especially well during critical periods in the history of the Estonian society, when the writers and Estonian literature, supporting the spiritual awareness, have created emotional and intellectual confidence. In the 1980s, during the period of the

apogee in the post-war socio-political literature in Estonia, literature was undoubtedly an open forum, the source of expectations and comfort.

It is not possible to underestimate the value of Estonian literature to those tens of thousands of people, who had to live in exile since 1944. Estonian literature was the only living and viable connection to the Estonian culture and society. Literature consolidated the society in exile, but was also a mental form of fighting for the liberation of the occupied homeland. The same can be said about the literature in the occupied Estonia (1940–1991). At the end of the 1980s, during the "singing revolution", literature was vigorously used in political rhetoric, in the texts of songs and public speeches. At the plenary of the Estonian creative associations on April 1–2 1988, which forwarded the message of the re-establishment of Estonian independence, writers played an important role. There is every reason to state that during these years Estonian literature and Estonian society was consolidated into one big and inseparable narrative.

When born as "minor literature" (Krull 1996: 87) in the second half of the 19th century, Estonian literature had to accomplish a major national mission, but in the 21st century the "major" (voluminous and various as to nominations) Estonian literature deals with its own issues. It does not have any dominant public outlet. Literature does not form symbolic capital in Estonia any more. The status of literature in the society and its social meaning is now identified by other parameters (literature market, media, etc).

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A Ricochet of Desiring Gazes: Inter-racial Eroticism and the Modern Colonial Gender System

MADINA TLOSTANOVA

> You said they understand nothing but violence? Of course, first the only violence is the settlers, but soon they will make it their own...the same violence is thrown back upon us as when our reflection comes forward to meet us when we go towards a mirror.
>
> Jean-Paul Sartre
> Preface to Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*

The erotic overtones of otherness in its imperial-colonial racialized dimension have recently been in the center of attention of a number of scholars throughout the world (Yen Le Espiritu 1997, McClintock 1995, Hill Collins 1990). The so called "porno tropic tradition" of European travel literature (McClintock 1995) that was shaped in the first modernity in connection with the conquering of Americas has mutated since then into the erotic Orientalism of the second modernity, that has been thoroughly documented, particularly in relation to Anglophone and Francophone literatures. However, the principles of erotic exotization and demonization are different in various locales and literatures, the reason for which lies in the imperial-colonial difference[1] and the way the modern colonial gender

[1] The colonial difference refers to the power differential between empires and colonies, while the imperial difference describes the power differential between empires of various ranks, e.g. the Western capitalist empires of modernity and the subaltern under-modernized, not-quite-western ones like Russia or the Ottoman empire.

system manifests itself in these spaces. I would like to explore how exactly the erotic and wider, the gender exotization and demonization is manifested in contemporary fiction in relation to particular imperial-colonial configurations.

Within the modern colonial system as defined by A. Quijano through the category of "coloniality of power"[2], the imperial difference mutates into the colonial one and this is particularly true in case of the external imperial difference like the Russian empire, which always felt itself a colony in the presence of the West and, at the same time, half heartedly played the part of the caricature "civilizer" in its non-European colonies. But the concept of the modern colonial system remains blind to the multiplicity and complexity of gender issues in the colonial world. That is why Maria Lugones has recently formulated her concept of the modern colonial gender system as an underlying logic of gender relations in modernity, instrumental in subjecting both men and women of color in all domains of existence (Lugones 2007). However, the local histories and the geo-politics and body-politics of knowledge (Mignolo 2005), which lie in the basis of M. Lugones's most interesting article cannot be automatically applied to the multiplicity of coloniality experiences around the world. The picture drawn by M. Lugones describes the most clear and well defined forms of racialization/genderization, while the case of Central Asia or Caucasus, modern Turkey or Eastern Europe, turns out to be more complex and blurred, as the very nature of the subaltern empire and its colonies gives birth to the mutant forms of gender discourses (Tlostanova, 2006).

I am going to dwell on the works of the South African Nobel Prize Winner J. M. Coetzee and a less internationally known South African writer Achmat Dangor. The epistemic-psychological-erotic desire mingled with fear of the other is presented in the form of the white guilt and black opacity (in case of Coetzee) and transcultural tricksterism in its aggressive or doomed overtones (in case of Dangor). I will also dwell at some length on the post-soviet complex

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[2] Coloniality of power is the underlying logic of socio-cultural relations in modernity, built on the supremacy of Europeans over the non-Europeans (Quijano 2000)

rendering of this problematic by analyzing Oksana Zabuzhko's rather nationalist *Field Studies of Ukrainian Sex* (Zabuzhko 1998) and Dina Damian's counter-discursive novelette *A Field Trip* (Damian 2006). These books roughly represent the four stances within the modern colonial gender system as defined by Maria Lugones, but they are also complicated by the specificity of their imperial/colonial relations. Coetzee represents the white male stance, Dangor – the colonized non-white male, Zabuzhko is an example of the colonized by the Russian/Soviet empire, but arguably white/almost European woman, and finally, Dina Damian's position is that of a racialized and colonized gendered other.

The modern colonial world system generated a set of myths within which all gender and sexual relations have been interpreted since then, irrespective of their local histories and colonial-imperial configurations. A crucial element of this system that demonstrates its variability in the fiction written in different locales is the importance of the visual for both gender and erotic exotization and the colonial one. It is necessary to deconstruct the internalized Western feminist idea of the visual (masculine) nature of any culture, which in fact is typical of the Western European "gaze", but not of many other cultures with a different or mixed predominant communication channels – sound, tactile, etc. For both postmodernism with its deconstruction of the Western (patriarchal) meta-narrative and its double – postcolonialism, the problematic of the desiring and hating gaze, as well as the returned and opaque gaze – comes forward. The psychology and ontology of the "returned gaze" and the parody of the colonized subject's mimicry have been extensively discussed by many commentators.

Thus, long before Homi Bhabha (Bhabha 1994), it had been addressed by Albert Memmi (Memmi 1991), by several Caribbean writers/philosophers, who interpreted the problem of mimicry in a close relation with a certain cultural configuration, rather than in Bhabha's detached way (Moore-Gilbert 1997, Ashcroft 2001). Causing the colonized to imitate the colonialist, the colonialist questions the legitimacy of his own identity. In the Caribbean models of hybridity and creolization they are regarded as defense mechanisms against the dominant discourse by means of specific cultural

forms and the use of language as a strategy and an area, in which the most effective destruction and subversion of the dominant culture takes place. Creolization consisting of two ambivalent contrastive processes – imitation (assimilation) and resistance of autochthonous element (its opacity), pointing out the possible and desirable production of creative ambivalence (Brathwaite 1984, 1995a, 1995b) functions in similar terms, that would be described later by Homi Bhabha – by means of slippage and indeterminacy (Bhabha 1994: 86). For this reason the effect of mimicry on the authority of colonial discourse is so profound and destroys it from within. But for the West-Indian intellectuals, mimicry is a negative process, destructive also for their self-identification, a specific state of looking at the world with blue eyes but from under the black skin, to use Derek Walcott's famous formula (Walcott 1972: 27).

Philosophic problem of the returned colonizer's gaze stands in the center of many contemporary trans-cultural writers' attention. J. M. Coetzee in *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) problematizes the colonizer's gaze returned by the colonized as a certain challenge – in the image of the mutilated and nearly blind girl (as a result of the tortures she can see only what is on the *borders* and *fringes* of her vision specter). The old Magistrate takes care of her as if he was taking repentance for the cruel deeds of Empire, exercising the colonizer's guilt. In this character there merges the cruelty of empire and the paradigmatic impenetrability of a subaltern, the painfully vivid representation of the disintegrating center losing its meaning, and the borders keeping the remnants of various previous and rejected meanings. For this reason the Magistrate who is himself a figure of the center, is looking into the girl's eyes' dead centers, where he can see nothing, just "the black irises set off by milky whites as clear as a child's" (Coetzee 1980: 28). The Magistrate is attracted by the specific marked nature of the unnamed girl's mutilation, a semiotic meaning of her injury. He has to decipher the signs of torture on her body which becomes a certain map of imperial/colonial relations, a manifestation of the body-politics of empire. "When she does not look at me I am a gray form moving about unpredictably on the periphery of her vision. When she looks at me I am a blur, a voice, a smell, a center of energy that one day

falls asleep washing her feet…" (Ib. 31) Looking into the girl's eyes Magistrate sees only opacity, impenetrability, only his own reflection without interpretation. Her injured eyes are just like the silence of Friday, whose tongue was cut off by Robinson Crusoe, according to the version presented in another Coetzee's novel *Foe*. Constantly pointing out the impenetrability of the *other* Coetzee combines it with the idea of shapelessness of our own and other's self, with their essential decentered-ness, meaninglessness, and impossibility of any human understanding. For this reason he finds the bodies of the girl and the Magistrate "diffuse, gaseous, centerless, at one moment spinning about a vortex here, at another curdling, thickening elsewhere, but often also flat, blank". (Ib. 36). Coetzee clearly plays here on the widely spread reflections on the desire of the other as primarily the desire to know the other which can be realized in an erotic form as it happens in D. Dabydeen's or Paul Theroux's fiction, or in a hard to realize desire to know the other's self, to penetrate beyond its impenetrable cocoon, as it happens with Magistrate. He speaks of a strange passion, which cannot quite shape itself as a sexual desire. Magistrate feels that "with this woman it is as if there is no interior, only a surface across which he hunts back and forth seeking entry… How natural a mistake to believe that you can burn or tear or hack your way into the secret body of the other !" (Ib. 46)

The same gaze it to be found in another Coetzee's novel *Disgrace* (1999) in the main character David Lurie. Throughout the narrative the reader faces his predictable complete objectification of all and every women he meets, linked by the author with the darker side of the romantic model of idealized love and passion, in the frame of which this rather unattractive character had been shaped. David can be called an unconscious and even, at times, a charming colonizer: he practices the colonizing racist and patriarchal discourses as if not even realizing their nature, blindly accepting the values of European modernity, which were given to him as the norm. He does not want to leave his superiority and condescending attitude to others behind – be they women, Black people, someone of a different sexual orientation, or even an animal. This kind of attitude can be based on subjugation, mercy, lust, sympathy, despise, but never on taking the other as your equal. Moreover, he is not able to imagine his own role

as an *other* for other people. Lurie is a typical champion of Western liberal ideology who firmly believes in the right to privacy and thus regards the efforts to reform him and make him go through a therapy as an infringement upon his freedom. He believes in individualism but only if it refers to his own life, whereas David allows himself to impudently and selfishly interfere into and spy on other peoples' lives, such as his paid sexual partner Soraya's and his student Melanie. Such an attitude to women cannot be described other than colonialist, which of course is masked by Lurie's false reflections on his right to passion and desire and his claim to share their beauty with him, that is again, usurpation, exotization, unlimited objectification of others. In fact David performs the same role of a rapist in relation to Melanie with a complete indifference to the dehumanized victim, as the black rapists would perform soon in relation to his own daughter. The author attracts attention to the almost erased difference between the educated white professor covering his lust by the romantic myths, and the group of black professional rapists specializing in marking their territory by making the white woman conceive of their semen. The author stresses again and again a characteristic blindness of the hero who is sensitive only to the offences and insults aimed at himself and his daughter, but remains completely insensitive when he brings suffering to others. That is why David sees his own lust as a manifestation of Eros, but is able to find only economic reasons for Lucie's rape, while his daughter insists on more complicated "anthropological" motifs, on the fragility and vagueness of the boundary between the act of love and the act of hatred and even murder, that no male, as she claims, is able to understand. David Lurie's end in a sense reminds of the Magistrate from *Waiting for the Barbarians*, having lost everything, David gradually learns to see, listen to and understand others – the real others such as his daughter or miserable dogs who end up in Bev's office, and imagined ones – such as Teresa, Byron's love.

In spite of the brilliant style, perfect command and philosophic depth of his works, Coetzee's position on gender and sexual objectification is rather static and predictable – it is that of a white South African manifestation of guilt and repentance. The gendered other remains opaque and in novel after novel his characters

unsuccessfully attempt to break the seal, but again and again they remain face to face with only their own ideas of otherness, unable to breech the gap between this notion and real others. Achmat Dangor's case is much more complex and less Manichean than that, which is connected with his own position of an elusive and mimicking trickster within the South African complex culture. A paradigmatic case of trans-cultural aesthetics, Dangor was himself a racially hybrid child (the same way as the main character in *Kafka's Curse* he comes from Indian/Javanese/Dutch ancestry) growing up in the old apartheid society in a small township, speaking several languages and bridging several cultures. Hence comes the trans-cultural complexity of his novels and the world view which was, an inadvertent result of his every day existence.

In his controversial novel *Kafka's Curse* (1997) the writer offers a whole array of straight and returned gazes, of surrendering and angry mimicries that reinforce Kafka's famous and finalized take on metamorphosis by enriching it with the dubious ancient wisdom of the Arabic migrant plot of Leila and Majnoen (both a name and a madness), that opens – in contrast with Kafka's tragic transfer into the absolute and abstract otherness – a multiplicity of questionable ways out. Within the complex structure of Dangor's novel told through a variety of voices, we find both the Western objectifying view of sex and gender, presented in a milder (feminine) way in Anna's relationship with her husband Oscar (a Muslim passing for a Jew) and in a radical (male) way – in her brother Martin's anxious and destructive desire of the gendered other – no matter if it is his own sister or even daughters – to fight the loneliness and fear by means of anger and violence. But this novel, in contrast with Coetzee's books, carries other models of desire of otherness as well, connected with a different intermediary positioning between cultures or a radical otherness viewed from within.

The first position is presented in the modern South African trickster Omar Khan passing for Oscar Kahn to win a place in the apartheid society and later – the love of his White Anna, and in the more radical angry female stance of the psychoanalyst Amina Mandelstam – a young woman with a Muslim name and a Jewish surname, whose role in the story seems to be that of a destroying

goddess, punishing all males. Kafka's curse afflicting Oscar (as Majnoen, he turned into a tree) is a punishment for his urge to assimilate, for his breaking the nature to fit the life of the white establishment. Oscar and his wife somehow switch the usual assigned gender roles – she, as a white person, performs the part of the desiring actor and it is not the husband that looks at her with desire but rather she herself gazes at him with a typical Western male gaze, at the same time remaining a chaste female on a pedestal. But we would find practically no description of Oscar's gazing at Anna while he remains apprehensive in a typically colonial way of how others see him, instead of focusing on looking at others. Besides, his fantastic association with the tree introduces the tactile rather than visual overtones into the text.

The position of Oscar's brother Malik seems to be more clear and transparent – however his conscious choice of Muslim tradition and despise for his passing brother seem to be a deliberately chosen identity to scare away his own madness (of becoming a bird) that Amina Mandelstam with her hybrid identity easily destroys with her demanding desire and temptation of an in-between – not quite other and not quite the same, not quite colored and Muslim, not quite white, moreover, making a successful career out of her carefully constructed exotic otherness. In contrast with Oscar who pays a high price for passing, Amina does not give up her religion or discard her family. As Fatgiyah (Malik's wife) shrewdly observes, comparing her husband's lover with her son's woman, she "gave up these things to be different, a woman with something strange to offer". While Marianne is what she is, because …she is Marianne. *She*'ll suffer because she is different. This Amina makes other people suffer" (Dangor 1997: 153).

Amina is obviously objectified and exotisized by every white men she had sex with and her position as a woman is more traditional because of the exoticist myth of a white male being attracted by the dark-skinned and sloe-eyed submissive female other, while Oscar's subverted stance of the male exoticism inevitably leads to symbolic stagnation and even castration (his sexuality is allowed to be expressed fully only outside of his role of the exotic other in the family). But the situation is complicated by the fact that Amina is

desired in an exoticizing way also by the non-whites, such as Malik, as they are attracted by her in-between-ness, her subdued sexuality, "the art of denied seduction" (Dangor 1997: 123), and the wildness and abandon that lies beneath. Amina herself is annoyed with the usual male patronizing politeness and attracted by both Malik and Omar, who offer folly instead of politeness and who "understand her loneliness and the fear of unbelonging" (Dangor 1997: 77).

In contrast with Coetzee, Dangor's position is not based entirely on the Western assumptions of visuality. Yet eyes and gazes are very important for the book, which is based on a complex gazing, on a ricochet of sent and returned gazes. The sexual element of desiring the other and a voyeuristic peeping linked with complete objectification, as well as endless combinations of these two, are among the main underlying springs of the characters' behavior. This gazing as the fascination and the desire of the other, is also a desire to destroy the other and humiliate him or her in order to "suffer love obsessively" (Dangor 1997: 91). From the female Amina's part, however, we find the same willingness to cross all the borders with her carnal and selfish desire of possession, so that the very act of love ends with just a distant moment of satiation, when "each is filled with a feeling of otherness". Fatgiyah, Rabia and Fadiel also speak with their eyes and this communication is marked with the fear to find the threatening otherness even in the most close relatives – children, husbands, wives. Thus Fatgiyah is afraid to look into the "bastard" blue eyes of Malik and Fadiel, the wrong eyes on their dark faces, the sign of the old sin, and Rabia would even compare her brother's eyes with the dirty dishwater. But Rabia's eyes are also scary for her mother – impenetrable, unpredictable, darker than her own. The eyes in this case are the instruments of resistance and independence, a way of saying "I won't accept this !" (Dangor 1997: 150)

Gazing acquires different overtones in Malik's exoticizing of Amina and his own wife Fatgiyah, who was covered from head to foot with thick body hair: "She was like a stranger, wondrously forbidden, a pornographic photograph observed with an ephemeral desire" (Dangor 1997: 90). The desire and gazing at the other does not come to only male/female relations in this book for the same

attraction to the other and also trying to liken it to the same are to be found in the way Fatgiyah sees her son's white lover Marianne who is also covered with thick hair. This similarity attracts Fatgiyah sexually, when she notices Marianne's manly kiss and hug, but also, as in Coetzee's Magistrate, this desire of the other cannot quite shape itself sexually, it is more a camaraderie of ugliness, as Rabia (Fatgiyah's daughter, who is another voyeur of a kind in this book) notices with disgust. Voyeurism is especially obvious in Amina's case, for it shaped her whole personality and formed her nausea for all men's eyes. Amina becomes a moral handicapped that attempts to find solace in an underground political organization and among the South African exiles where "she was not used and abused. Or if she was it was a willing participation in a charade of comradely promiscuity, herself readily using and abusing" (Dangor 1997: 205). Dangor has no illusions about the psychological stance of the political exile which disintegrates the souls and makes cripples out of people, unable to really love or trust anyone. It is the dark violence that marks them all – the white and the colored alike.

But voyeurism is even deeper than that, as it shapes the South African society as such. Amina is cursed with humiliating voyeurism that makes her change to an exotic and punishing other, but almost all other characters and families in this book are also cursed with the deadly metamorphosis which is a natural outcome of apartheid society and the disgusting culture of perpetual lying that was created as a result. This culture leads to strange and ugly suicidal and incestual secrets of the schizophrenic white-colored world where everyone is insane and no one is what he or she seems to be. And the novel is written out of the very midst of this crazy life and not from an outside, a presumably Archimedean position as in Coetzee's case.

In post-soviet space there is a particular logic of mimicry and gazing, which can be described as the doubling of mimicry problematic and multiply returned gazes, from Russia gazing at its various others to Europe gazing at Russia as its other. In Russia the colonizer is not quite a fitting candidate for this role, at least from the European perspective, and is aware of this deficiency, compensating it in his relations with the colonized, based on the rigid frames of difference. A. Memmi's logic of the emergence of Francophiles in

the colonies (Memmi 1991: 15), is destabilized and doubled in the history of Russian and Soviet empires, in the relations of the Russian colonizer with the non-European colonies on the one hand, and Russia and the West, on the other. Bhabha calls the colonial mimicry the "metonymy of presence" (Bhabha 1994: 120). But for him it is the problem of living "in between" an Englishman and an anglicized, between the mutual cultural stereotypes. In Russia this problematic is doubled again, but at the same time remains under-expressed or even under-realized. Because the Russian colonizer himself is a representation of mimicry in its extreme form, while his colonial subject is a gray and blurred copy of the copy, a simulacrum without real reference, which questions the very authority of Russian colonizer as a possible role model. For many colonial subjects in the Russian empire this problem acquires a more complex form of subversion and, consequently, the necessity of establishing certain relations of mimicry not only with Russian, but also with Western culture. And this double dependence gives birth to specific angles and optics of vision in the realization of their compound marginality.

In post-Soviet imaginary, mimicry is re-conceptualized in comparison with the well known post-colonial models of constructing the subjectivity of same and other, as the Russian identification is based on constant copying and further altering of various foreign models. In the books of many contemporary Russian writers there emerges a distorted metaphor of mimicry of the whole Russian culture as a subaltern imperial culture in relation to the West. The ambivalence of Russian self-identification vis-à-vis the Western culture leads to the changes in the psychological structure of mimicry in the Russian "self". It is based not only on the copying for the sake of survival and raising the social status, but also on the internal rejection and unconscious willingness to introduce something of one's own, to make the copy non-identical to the original. Discrimination of the gendered colonial subject is not just a result of the colonizers' efforts, but also the effect of the silent agreement between the colonizer and the colonized male subject. This phenomenon was thoroughly studied by a number of third world feminists (Gunn Allen 1992, Oyewùmi 1997, Crenshaw 1995). However, in Soviet and post-Soviet societies it is complicated by additional ideological

overtones, and not just race, as it is clearly seen in Oksana Zabuzhko's novel *Field Studies of Ukrainian Sex*. Here we find a whole set of colonial and Soviet dependency in which the ugly relations of children and parents who project their victimization onto their off-springs, gradually turn into the perception of motherland as killing its own children by preventing them from being and thinking independently. The father of the autobiographical character who spent half of his life in Stalin's purgatory, is presented as a disgusting character, crushed with fear, in almost Freudian overtones, as a reason for all the heroine's future sexual failures.

This sexually nationalist novel manages to combine gender, nationalist, anti-Soviet and anti-Russian layers of self-identification. Usually in Western literature this theme is presented within the frame of imperial-colonial difference – the love of a European man and a beautiful and exotic savage or barbarian girl. Zabuzhko presents this problematic through the way the colonized subjects – the Soviet males, wreck their own complexes, fear and oppression on women who depend on them – on their mothers, wives and daughters. The father in Zabuzhko's book is an ex-prisoner, accused of "parasitism", and now spending his days by listening to the "enemy voices" on the radio, someone forever broken, and at the same time, having chosen a convenient stance of the victim which makes everyone feel guilty. He justifies his real parasitism by the Stalin's camps and dies of cancer "to make everyone finally take his side". In his cruel and proprietary love of his daughter, in his maniacal willingness to control her even in the most intimate spheres, the father is trying to make his own failed wishes and dreams come true, seeing the daughter as his only successful creation. Zabuzhko stresses the erotic-sadistic overtones of empire, its castrating role, the fact that the empire robs its subjects of both feminine and masculine traits, producing sex-less men and women or sadists.

The stressed gender element should be regarded, as it turns out, not as a feminist but rather as anti-Soviet in a specific sense of Soviet patriarchy that created its monster – in Zabuzhko's variant – a Ukrainian man, but in fact, a wider species of Soviet males. As a result of Russian and Soviet colonization the traditional family and gender roles were destroyed or considerably changed, which led to

the emergence of this specific phenomenon, who in case of colonies was also racialized and quickly lost all previous features of masculinity, was violently freed from traditional religious and value systems, that used to protect him from various ethical faults, constantly projecting his own humiliation onto women and children.

A crucial aspect of gender problematic lies in the Western principles of gender identity construction by means of which the modern colonial gender system excluded from the realm of human and feminine (the social gender dimension) the representatives of non-western world – to facilitate their discrimination, exploitation and objectification. This phenomenon is transparent in case of Amerinidians and African slaves, who were often put on the level of animals, but in Russia and its non-European colonies the picture was different. Intellectually dependent, the Russian empire, while borrowing from the French enlightenment the idea of the noble savage, projected it onto the local groups that performed a similar role to the one of the African slaves and Amerinidians in the New World and was coded as racially other (non-European), though it was in reality the same. These were the Russian serfs. This logic manifested itself in a peculiar way in the gender sphere. If the white Creole elites in the Caribbean, Latin America and the South of the US economically, psychologically and sexually exploited the African slave women, in Russia this general logic seemingly lacked the racial dimension or rather, racism was virtual in this case, though no less cruel and dehumanizing. The women-serfs were not only exploited in economic and psychological ways as under-humans, but were also attractive sexual objects because they had the features that an elite Russian woman lacked by definition.

With the borrowing of Orientalist discourses in the 19th century when the Russian empire was actively colonizing first Caucasus and later Central Asia, this problematic acquired more typically European racist forms and the wrong color of skin came to be associated with otherness. However, there were no blacks or Indians in Russia, so the European classifications of the humankind did not work properly, being mechanically applied by the Russian elites to the newly colonized spaces. A good example is an 1837 diary entry of a certain lieutenant N. Simanovsky, who during the Caucasus war

was surprised to find out that the captured Cherkess princess was "quite attractive and – what is most strange – quite white" (Simanovsky 1999). Since in his reference system she belonged to the "savages" she was supposed to be non-white. Traces of this mutant biological racism we can find in the majority of Russian 19th century romantic works – from A. Pushkin and M. Lermontov to sexual orientalist tales of A. Bestuzhev-Marlinsky. But an important difference with the "European porno-tropic tradition" here would be the more pronounced exoticist and not demoninzing bend and the general inclination of Russian literature towards spiritual, compassionate and tolerant elements – again, much more pronounced than in case of European or American traditions.

It is difficult to find a good literary projection of this problematic in contemporary post-Soviet fiction. And yet there is one example of the canonical counter-discourse based on classical Russian literature and written by a young woman writer of ethnically non-Russian origin for whom the project of epistemic and aesthetic decolonization seems to be the central one. Her chosen rehabilitated other of Russian literature is Bela from Mikhail Lermontov's *The Hero of Our Time*. Gender relations stand in the center of Dina Damian's novelette *The Field Trip*. The specific Orientalist gender context is stressed from the start with the epigraph from Kipling's "Lispeth", although the Russian caricature colonizer Pechorin is certainly different from his British original. As for the gendered and racialized other – Bela, here the tradition had to be created from scratch, because until now both classical and modern Russian literature mainly featured a male voice, which inevitably effected the way the colonial women were presented in fiction. Moreover, the issues of sexuality, gendered eroticism and sexual violence were completely excluded out of the scope of literature. Damian brings it all back into the fiction in her novelette, stressing the scene of Bela's rape, as well as the protagonists' gazing duels as the two ways of dealing with otherness and later, their rejection of the other in open and pure hatred and violence.

There are two female characters in this work, one of which imagines the other – a teenaged Dina from the framing story, representing a border consciousness which refuses to take sides (both

imperial and nationalist) and is likened to Lermontov in that respect, and Bela, whom Dina resurrects from the deadening grip of canonical interpretations and re-imagines in her own version of the *Hero of Our Time*. Her Bela is a negation of all gender colonial stereotypes, naive and implausible at times, because it is a fantasy of a fourteen-year-old "author", but a gendered canonical counter-discourse nonetheless. This Bela is a tomboy, she is compared not to a doe, but to a wild cat. She can read and likes to do it, especially the books about other countries, she does not like typically women occupations and her most dear dream is to travel around the world and see other places and other people. She is enchanted with otherness, but it is an enchantment of a non violent kind – until she meets Pechorin. At the same time Bela remains a prisoner of gender stereotypes, even if she does not accept them. However her position changes drastically after she realizes that Pechorin betrayed her. And the reluctant following of the gender stereotypes turns overnight into the violent revenge that deliberately crosses all gender lines.

Gazing is an important element in *The Field Trip*: the fourteen-year-old Dina's gazing is marked with her non-belonging – she is curious, but she stands above and beyond her classmates and this is a result of her ethnic and cultural in-between-ness, her clear gender independence and her future writer's non-belonging. Her imagined Pechorin and Bela also gaze at each other. Bela does it with childish curiosity – since she is free from Romantic stereotypes, she sees Pechorin for what he is – an unattractive, small officer of an almost unidentifiable gender. While Pechorin looks at Bela through the Orientalist lens, marked with the sense of complete impunity – as if she was a graceful animal, a trophy, or even a profit, but not a human being. She is supposed to correspond to the romantic exoticist image of a beautiful savage and when she does not, he quickly loses interest in her.

The novelette contains direct quotations from the *Hero of Our Time,* from Bestuzhev-Marlinsky's and even Nikolay Martynov's works and real letters and documents, shuffled in a peculiar pastiche. Having been put into a different context, they acquire quite an unexpected meaning. One reason for this peculiar strangeness is that we see it all through Dina's interpretation of Russian culture and

literature, which is far from canonical. It starts and departs from the West (she first reads Kipling and Brontë and only then – Lermontov) and places Russian Orientalism into the context of the European one: "Behind Pechorin's cold and detached description of female logic, that reminded her of condescending zoological observations of the unknown new species, Dinka constantly fancied a puffed up Rochester, who locked his miserable wife in the scary attic, and the British officer, who abandoned the loving Lispeth" (Damian 2006: 51). A born deconstructivist, Dina is even more dangerous for the established order than the openly nationalist Zaur. She claims that Pushkin and Lermontov were "simply imitators of Byron and Vigny and other European romantics" (Damian 2006: 44), thus arguing against the sacred element of the Soviet/Russian canon –the assertion of the uniqueness of Russian literature. But Damian is also sensitive to the difference between the position of Brontë, as a white European woman author, and herself as a colonial subaltern one. That is why she chooses Bela and not princess Mary for her project of re-humanizing.

Bela's resurrection in Damian's version of the story is presented as an implausible exception from the historical rule that Lermontov presented in his novel. But even historical logic has its exceptions at times and this Bela is not doomed, having killed Pechorin, she escapes into a better and happier life. "Dinka thought that really, Bela did not have a choice, she could acquire her voice only by way of violence in response" (Damian 2006: 71). Violence and revenge then are, as well as in case of Dangor, the real and inevitable motifs behind the characters' behavior.

Sexism of romantic Orientalist fiction is a well documented fact. The more interesting then becomes how Damian turns this inside out and makes her Bela (and not Pechorin) the main gazing actor in the story. Moreover, Pechorin and Bela exchange their gender roles. He gives her the impression of an androgynous being – a wrong male gaze on his effeminate face. While Bela's change into men's clothes after the murder becomes a complex psychological gesture: she consciously chooses a male gender role for herself, she becomes a master of her own metamorphosis. But she does it also to demarcate herself from the violent image associated with murder – she needs to

become a man in order to perform an un-womanly action – a bloody revenge. It is a manifestation of schizophrenia, not only colonial, but also gendered, both of which breed violence.

In all of the books that I attempted to analyze above gender and race difference, established by the dominating culture and reflected in the distorted form in the culture which becomes a forced recipient, is realized in the desire and, at the same time, fear and rejection of the exotic other. This is connected with the schizophrenic way of interpreting otherness, that was established in the modern colonial gender system. It was based on the principle of multiple reflection by a set of distorted mirrors facing each other. From book to book, in male and female variants of fictional rendering of this problematic, in various imperial-colonial configurations, only violence against the other and his or her redemptive violence in response, remains the real answer to this dilemma. The female variants, created on the remnants of the subaltern Russian/Soviet empire, as in Damian's case, as well as the gender-sexual sensibility of an in-between racialized male other, as in case of Dangor, are the most interesting, complex and promising fictional manifestations of this problematic, that at least attempt to make the next step from violence to understanding, from frozen binaries to diversality, from acculturation to trans-culturation and to asserting the trans-cultural aesthetic and subjectivity, based on the right to difference that is justified by the right to equality.

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Debunking the Multicultural Dream: Diasporic Identities on the Contemporary Multi-ethnic Canadian Stage[1]

CAROLINE DE WAGTER

> Cultural identity is not fixed, it's always hybrid. But this is precisely because it comes out of very specific historical formations, out of very specific histories and cultural repertories of enunciation, that it can constitute a 'positionality' which we call, provisionally, identity. (Hall 1996: 502)

I. Introduction

As an age-old phenomenon, migration has acquired a special significance within the context of the Western colonial expansion. It reached its culmination in the Twentieth century, when it implied the formation of a number of diverse diasporic communities within the social fabric of Western hegemonic centres.[2] In his study of diasporic culture and identity, cultural critic Stuart Hall traces the complex processes of assimilation, resistance, and negotiation as typical

[1] This essay is based on a revised version of a paper initially presented at the annual Association for Canadian Theatre Research (ACTR) conference in Toronto. I wish to thank the Centre for Canadian Studies of the Université Libre de Bruxelles for funding my trip. I am also indebted to Professors Marc Maufort and Franca Bellarsi for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this essay.

[2] Among others, Roger Bromley's *Narratives for a New Belonging: Diaporic Cultural Fictions* offers valuable comments upon Twentieth Century migratory experiences in relation to issues of diaspora.

markers of all diasporas.[3] As suggested in the quote opening this essay, diasporic experiences entail porous and hybrid cultural identities anchored in complex historical and cultural 'positionalities.' Predominantly characterized by cultural memory and narratives, diasporic experiences involve no mere rediscovery of roots: they imply a remembering of the past and a reworking of the future. From this particular 'site of enunciation,' to borrow Homi Bhabha's formulation, diasporic subjects open up new ways of re-imagining multicultural identities.

Based on the assumption that the study of single texts and cultures is significantly enriched by knowledge of other textual and cultural practices, comparative literature provides a unique opportunity to explore interrelations between literature and areas such as, for instance, cultural studies and postcolonialism. Increasingly reflected in the country's contemporary literature, Canada's multicultural character proves well-suited to study fragmentation of perspectives. Its multicultural construct therefore offers a particularly interesting vantage point for comparative literature.

Even if Canada was officially proclaimed a multicultural nation in 1988, an image often legitimated and popularized by the myth of the "cultural mosaic," it seems that the Canadian multicultural policy nevertheless hides mechanisms of assimilations similar to that of the American melting pot.[4] As such, the metaphor of the Canadian mosaic reiterates the proclaimed Canadian concepts of tolerance, freedom and diversity. However, as a social metaphor, the mosaic also "assumes that each piece in the society has a preferred place, in keeping with the grand design" (Nothof 1999: 1). Some mosaic tiles

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[3] Among others, the reader is advised to turn to Stuart Hall's following articles: "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," "New Ethnicities," "For Allon White. Metaphors of Transformation" and "Who Needs 'Identity'?"

[4] See, among others, Mayte Gómez' article in which she proposes a model of "Interculturalism" as an alternative to the concept of "Multiculturalism," as well as Neil Bissoondath's book, *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*, in which the author underscores the problematic aspects of the multicultural policy in Canada: seduction through repetition of gentle and well-meaning generalizations (41), political interests hidden behind a beautiful façade (43–46), inherent and persistent racism of Canadian history (33–35).

figure centrally; others – such as those representing immigrants for instance – "are usually on the edges" (ib.).

Considered by some as a sign of the collective historical guilt or even hypocrisy resulting from Canada's racist history and discriminatory immigration policies, the Canadian multicultural project remains a worthy ideal in its defence of cultural diversity and recognition of the country multi-ethnic heritages. Since the 1970s, Canadian drama – in itself quite a recent phenomenon – has become a reflector of the country's increasingly multicultural character. Drawing on insights developed by Stuart Hall and Homi Bhabha's postcolonial theories, this essay will focus on Canadian visible minority playwrights who dramatize the complexities of diasporic experiences in the Canadian context. This article does of course not claim to exhaust the vast landscape of Canadian multicultural drama. However, within its perforce limited format, this paper proposes to analyze fours plays, two by South Asian playwrights, Rana Bose and Rahul Varma respectively, and two by Afro-Canadian dramatists, Hector Bunyan on the one hand, and maxine bailey and sharon mareeka lewis on the other. Hector Bunyan's *Prodigals in a Promised Land*, maxine bailey and sharon mareeka lewis's *sistahs,* Rana Bose's *Baba Jacques Dass and Turmoil at Cote-Des-Neiges Cemetery*, and Rahul Varma's *Job Stealer* each unveil racial injustice, expose discriminatory immigration policies, and debunk homogenizing conceptions of identities in order to negotiate questions of alterity.

Written in the wake of Canada's openly multicultural societal project, the plays mentioned above in fact announced an emerging wave of playwrights, whose works have not failed to elicit critical attention. Yet, few scholars have hitherto offered a cross-ethnic perspective on this material. In an attempt to avoid reductionist ethnic homogenizations, the comparative and thematic approach undertaken in this essay will seek to illuminate striking similarities and differences between works that are too rarely discussed together. In the first part, this essay will underline the importance of minority cultural dramatic productions in the process of understanding the diasporic experiences. Furthermore, this first section will show how immigrants demystify the so-called Canadian Multicultural Dream.

The second part will foreground how the conditions of displacement and migration inform new understandings of contemporary Canadian 'cultural and hybrid identities.' I contend that the non-canonical plays selected in this paper constitute significant "case studies" which perfectly illustrate the theoretical and thematic issues under consideration. Moreover, once applied to other Canadian multicultural plays, this comparative approach could contribute to a better understanding of these complex works within the literary canon of contemporary Canada.

II. Diasporic Experiences in the Canadian Multicultural Context

In their insightful criticism, Stuart Hall and Homi K. Bhabha offer new ways of thinking the diasporic condition in cultural and postcolonial studies. The term "diaspora" (originally from the Greek, meaning "to disperse") refers mainly to the political and cultural situations arising from Western colonialism. Indeed, diasporic moves are defined as a displacement from the underprivileged former colonized Third World to the metropolitan centres of the formerly colonialist West. The practices of slavery and indenture resulted in world-wide colonial diasporas. Consequently, the descendants of the diasporic movements generated by slavery and other colonial practices have developed their own distinctive cultures which both preserve and often extend their culture of origin.[5] Creolized versions of their own practices evolved, modifying (and being modified by) indigenous cultures with which they came into contact. The development of diasporic cultures thus necessarily questions essentialist models, interrogating the ideology of a unified and 'natural' cultural norm, one that underpins the centre/margin model of colonialist discourse. (Ashcroft 1999: 70).

In the context of this essay, diasporic experiences describe migratory movements from underprivileged former "occupation"

[5] Paradoxically, even though the degree of suffering and pain were different, the Colonizers who settled in the colonies also often extended and developed their culture of origin.

colonies such as the Caribbean islands or India to the once "settler-invader" colony of Canada. Although Canada does not belong to the first or old world of Europe, it is not poor enough to be included in the third world. Canada is thus located in an awkward "second world" position that is neither one nor the other. Colonizers and Colonized at the same time, Canadians find themselves in a complex situation that unmasks the paradoxical nature of the term 'postcolonialism.' Indeed, Canadians were colonized at the same time as they themselves were colonising indigenous peoples. The phrase post-colonial thus resonates with all the ambiguity and complexity of the many different diasporic experiences it implies. (Gilbert and Tompkins 1996: 1–5). The question is then *how*, from their specific position in the Canadian context, the playwrights under consideration strike back, resist, and challenge the violent attempts to assimilate, erase and silence them.

While until recently African Canadian communities had been characterised by absence, and erasure on the stage, anthologies such as *Testifyin' (Volumes I and II)*, edited by leading African Canadian playwright, Djanet Sears, reveal that in the last decades Afri-Canadian playwrights have powerfully emerged on the Canadian theatrical scene in order to *testify* to the existence of diverse and dynamic Afri-Canadian experiences. Until the significant West Indian immigration of the past 15 years, most Canadian Blacks had entered Canada from the US. (Krauter and Davis 1978: 43–47). As Sears indicates, "the eradication of the 'preferred nationalities' immigration policy in Canada, and the introduction of the 'point system' in the 1960s, brought about a significant increase in the population of Caribbean immigrants, most of whom were Toronto-bound" (Sears 2000: ix).

Likewise, the South Asian presence in Canada has become increasingly predominant and influential in the field of theatre and drama. Numerous plays and anthologies by South Asian Canadian playwrights have been successfully produced and published in recent years. Poet and playwright Uma Parameswaran, for instance, has edited critical volumes such as *An Introduction to South Asian Canadian Literature* and *Saclit Drama: Plays by South Asian Canadians*, which both attest to the growing influence of this ethnic

community in the Canadian literary landscape.[6] As Vassanji explains, the South Asian presence in Canada is the result of a massive migratory movement across geographical, political, and cultural barriers and originates predominantly from the countries of South Asia – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka – as well as those of the Caribbean and East and South Africa.[7]

First produced at Toronto's Theatre Passe Muraille in 1981, *Prodigals in a Promised Land* was one of the very few plays from African Canadian playwrights to appear on the Canadian stage. In this play, Hector Bunyan examines the utopian depiction of Canada from the perspective of a family of Caribbean extraction. As such, *Prodigals* dramatizes the rift in the transplanted family, which emigrated to Canada from Jamaica in search of a better life and education. As the play's title indicates, Theo yearns for intellectual fulfilment, as well as social and economic recognition. On the other hand, Gloria has reluctantly abandoned her homeland to follow her husband to Toronto. From the play's outset, the author emphasizes contrasting attitudes towards the diasporic experience: an optimistic and idealist vision on the one hand, and negative and painful feelings of sacrifice on the other.

As the plot further reveals, the reality of Toronto turns out to be quite different from Theo and Gloria's dreams: "Ten years ago when we came here, life wasn't easy as we thought it would be; our dreams were too big for a tiny room" (156).[8] Theo's hope of obtaining a PhD degree is unlikely to be realized while Gloria has become a prostitute to bring money into the household. Moreover, in the play's numerous flashbacks, the couple appears on the verge of exploding under the pressure of their constant struggle to cope with their new Canadian

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[6] Uma Parameswaran coined the term "Saclit," which stands for **S**outh **A**sian **C**anadian **Lit**erature.

[7] For a detailed historical overview of the South Asian Diaspora as well as a brief survey of the works written by South Asian Canadian poets, novelists and playwrights, the reader might fruitfully turn to Parameswaran's book, *An Introduction to South-Asian-Canadian Literature*, East as well as to Vassanji's work, *A Meeting of Streams: South Asian Canadian Literature*.

[8] All quotes from the play come from Bunyan's *Prodigals in a Promised Land* – D. Sears, ed., *Testifyin': Contemporary African Drama. Vol. I.* Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press: 151–214.

environment. In Flashback Two for instance, Theo's bitterness echoes the ordeal of any immigrant looking for a stable job in Canada: "I couldn't even get a job as a floor-cleaner, probably because the floors are Canadian and I would clean them with a different accent" (163). Caught in a vicious circle, immigrants are unable to find a job: they either lack Canadian experience, are over- or under-qualified.

When Gloria announces her pregnancy in Flashback Three, Theo's reaction bespeaks his profound disillusion in the Canadian multicultural dream:

> What will be that child's future? [...] Well let me tell you: it will be that of a victim, the victim of a father catching his ass at menial jobs and a mother who couldn't wait, because she had to justify the sole reason for her existence: that she could breed. (169)

As this passage indicates, Theo's initial optimistic vision of an improved life has significantly changed. Not only is he unable to rejoice upon hearing that he is a father, he also denigrates his wife. By pointing out Gloria's "sole reason for existence" in Toronto, Theo underlines that the opportunities of immigrant men and women are still highly biased and unequal in contemporary Canada.

Forced to "become a predator to survive" (173), Theo has "become the worst example of indifference" (172). In the end, Theo even decides to move out of the house and relinquish his PhD studies for menial jobs, while Gloria decides to go back to her home country, abandoning her daughter and husband behind. As this story shows, far from being a 'promised land,' the real Canadian city of Toronto constitutes a merciless environment in which the young couple cannot adapt. Bunyan thus crudely depicts the often naïve misconceptions of a tolerant multicultural Canada. Moreover, the play's non-linear and fragmented structure also challenges the idea of the well-made play.

Similarly to *Prodigals*, Rana Bose's *Baba Jacques Dass and Turmoil at Cote-Des-Neiges Cemetery*, first staged at the Centaur Theatre in Montreal in 1987, mirrors the multiple contradictions contained in the utopian vision of the Canadian multicultural dream. Co-founder and artistic director of Montreal Serai, Rana Bose came from

Calcutta to Montreal in 1977.[9] Like his other plays – *On the Double* (1993) and *Five or Six Characters in Search of Toronto* (1994), to cite but a few – *Baba Jacques* highlights the theme of protest in order to shed light on the shortcomings that perpetuate an unfair society.[10] By depicting the difficulties of a writer from an Indian heritage to be published in Montreal, Toronto or even New York, Bose skilfully reveals the systemic ghettoization of the South Asian Canadian Other, a marginalization that is both self-imposed and government imposed.

In contrast to the fragmented plotline of *Prodigals*, *Baba Jacques* displays a fairly chronological storyline. However, many sections of the play take place in Cotes-des-Neiges cemetery, a suburban area of Montreal, where literary ghosts intrude the realist fabric of the play. In this mysterious world, Neela and Binoy confront stereotyped visions of their ethnicity, embodied by the ghosts, and eventually reconnect with their home country, India, through the stories narrated by the French Canadian mystic, Jacques Mercier.

For instance, Mr Fraser, one of the ghosts, turns into an immigrant officer and thereby conveys the naive and racist ideas behind official procedures of border entry into Canada:

> Mr Fraser: [...] where is your turban?
> Binoy: I am not a Sikh, sir [...]
> Mr. Fraser: Oh yeah, that's what they are all saying [...] until they get their status
> [...] Who is going to be responsible for you?
> Binoy: I am a skilled machinist sir, I am an experienced NC programmer. (199–200)

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[9] For a detailed overview of Rana Bose's career and playwriting, see Parameswaran's interview of Rana Bose, "I Believe in Zapping the Audience," in *Canadian Theatre Review [CTR]* 94, as well as Bose's "Theatre Notes on a Bright October Morning in Montreal," in *CTR* 94.

[10] The theatre of protest developed by South Asian Canadians owes its format to the people's theatre movement in Bengal, led by Badal Sarcar, and the Marxist movement in India in the early decades of the century. It also uses many of the standard stage techniques and strategies used by Indian folk theatre over the centuries. While the plots move around the problems faced by South Asians and other "visible minorities" in Canada, many of the stage techniques are a transplant from India's folk and popular traditions. For further details, see Parameswaran's introduction in *Saclit Drama: Plays by South Asian Canadians*.

Through such a conversation enacted on stage, the author forces the audience to confront the array of stereotyped assumptions held about the Indian Other or the "Orient" in general. Bose thereby unveils the simplistic nature of these clichés while at the same time emphasizing the danger of homogenization.

In addition to debunking stereotyped assumptions, the presence of ghosts is, as Lois Parkinson Zamora notes, "inherently oppositional because they represent an assault on the scientific and materialistic assumptions of Western modernity" (Zamora 1995: 498). As in magic realist fictions, ghosts in their many guises unsettle the spectator's / reader's expectations by asking them to "look beyond the limits of the knowable" (ib.). In other words, while Bunyan's theatre proved challenging in its fragmented structure, Bose's play subverts traditional dramatic codes in its reliance on ghosts to debunk stereotypical assumptions.

Rana Bose co-founded the Montreal-based theatre company, *Teesri Duniya (Third World)* with Rahul Varma. In recent decades, Varma wrote and co-authored numerous plays in English: *Trading Injuries* (1993), *Counter Offence* (1996) and *Bhopal* (2005), among others. His early play *Job Stealer* focuses on the controversy over jobs allegedly taken by refugees and immigrants from born-in-Canada Canadians. Like many of the above-mentioned plays, *Job Stealer* exposes disillusionment, racism, and intolerance encountered upon arrival on Canadian shores.

From the outset, the play's heterogeneous cast of characters illustrates the authors' willingness to represent a multiplicity of voices, religions, cultures and social backgrounds: Martha and Julio, a caring couple; Nalla, a Sri Lankan male refugee; Kabul, a Moslem male refugee; Anna, a European refugee; and Jing, a woman of Oriental heritage (99). However, as Varma himself warns, representative voices of particular communities can be dangerous as these "promote a general, homogenous representation of the community and thereby obscure the creative plurality that actually exists within it" (Varma 1985: 25–28).

In this play, even though Varma relies on global labels such as "Oriental" or "European," the characters do not so much speak as representatives of a particular community as serve to illustrate the universality of the vicissitudes to which any immigrant is subjected:

JULIO: El Salvador, Guatemala, Chile.
ANNA: Haiti, South Africa, Ethiopia.
BABUL: Bangladesh, Sri Lanka.
NALLA: Iran, Lebanon.
JING: Vietnam, Kampuchea. (104)

The passage quoted above shows the protagonists stand for refugees coming from any country plagued by political tensions and war, emphasizing the diasporic aspect of the play.

As a whole, the play denounces the vicissitudes endured by all immigrants who arrive in Canada. In this sense, the Canadian immigrant officers' ruthless interrogations strongly reminds Mr Frazer in Bose's *Baba Jacques*: "Stand up ... no sit down ... sit here... no stand ... line up... walk... stop" (106). Upon their arrival on Canadian soil, the refugees become voiceless victims. The protagonists' submissive obedience to a dehumanizing authority emphasizes their objectification. Besides, the various job interviews illustrate the vicious circle in which immigrants are caught: "no immigration without a job and no job without Canadian experience" (Parameswaran 1998: 11). Rejected because they are "either overqualified or have no Canadian experience" (112), the immigrants' hardships and humiliation strongly echo the struggles faced by Theo in *Prodigals* or even Binoy in *Baba Jacques*.

Drawing to a close, the play skilfully reminds the audience that Canada is largely a country of immigrants. As Julio remarks, many Canadians just "got here a few years before us" (117). Determined to denounce the exploitation of "cheap, dumb labour" (119), *Job Stealer* positively asserts that refugees do not steal but "create jobs!" (123). To the stereotyped belief that refugees constitute a burden to "be borne by Canadian tax payers" (109), Varma offers a counter-image: refugees with "Two hands to work!" (126) slavering in incredibly harsh working conditions. Like in many of Varma's other plays, *Job Stealer* ends on a note of hope and reconciliation. The refugees "thank those who accepted us. The agencies and the people, and the nations" (126).

In their successful play, *sistahs*, which premiered in Toronto at the Poor Alex Theatre in 1994, maxine bailey and sharon lewis offer yet another insight into Canadian diasporic experiences: they narrate

the throes and suffering of five women coming from West Africa and the Caribbean. As the other plays of this essay, *sistahs* exposes the struggle to survive in the continuing racist and sexist realities of contemporary Canada.

Through play's spatial and culinary metaphors, the authors "dramatize the psychic healing of the wounds of diaspora and slavery" (Maufort 2004: 62). The setting is a "warm, bright, large apartment" (281)[11] in which a kitchen stands on the centre stage.[12] Metaphorically, the stage becomes "a powerful testimony of Black women's potential to nurture, nourish, restore the self and the community through transforming rituals of healing" (Davis 2000: 279). Indeed, as a typically female communal area, the kitchen represents a symbolic space where women can care for their families, develop their creativity, and assert power. In cooking a traditional Caribbean soup, the women on stage engage in a process of reconciliation with the past, renegotiation of their sense of self in the present, as well as re-assertion of solidarity between generations of Black women for the future.

Very much like the ingredients added to the soup in the course of the performance, the five women enter the stage one at a time, in an order similar to the one displayed in the prologue, ironically labelled "Dessert." The play's subsequent 18 scenes, entitled "The Preparation," "Peeling, Chopping, Cutting," "Boiling!," "Simmering," "Dishing," and "Nyamming," gradually evolve at the same pace as the cooking itself. In other words, the performance is endowed with the symbolic qualities of the structuring food metaphor. The play may stand for the soup itself – this hybrid mix of actors/ingredients coming from different geographical spaces, whose multiple cultural heritages spice up the performance with a variety of 'flavours.'

Furthermore, the process of food preparation metaphorically symbolizes the coming to terms with social and psychic traumas. In her lectures, Sandra revisits history and slavery through the lens of contemporary feminism. Sandra's struggle with her womb cancer is clearly related to "the wound of slavery" (Maufort 2004: 63). The

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[11] All quotes come from Bailey, M. and S. M. Lewis's play, sistahs. – D. Sears, ed., *Testifyn': Contemporary African Drama. Vol. I.* Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press: 278–328.

protagonist's assertion, "I carry my story in my womb" (283), indicates that Sandra needs to make peace with the ghosts of the past in order to survive in the present.

The soup ritual is in fact meant to discuss Assita's future in the hope of finding a viable solution in case Sandra dies. Throughout the plot, the tense mother-daughter relationship evolves in parallel to the soup preparation. Sandra, a feminist mother, fails to offer her daughter survival strategies that can help her avoid the mistakes of the past. Ironically, Sandra wishes her daughter to help clean the house and forces her to participate in the cooking of the soup; two typical tasks that have usually prevented women from playing a more constructive role in life. The authors thereby demonstrate the difficulty of escaping one's condition and conditioning as a Black woman entrapped in a particular type of society.

Each in their own ways, the plays analyzed in this first section dramatize the tribulations associated to diasporic experiences. While demystifying the Canadian multicultural promises, they all challenge traditional dramatic codes through the fabric of theatrical performance: fragmented storyline (*Prodigals* or *sistahs*), ghostly apparitions (*Baba Jacques*), or heterogeneous cast of characters (*Job Stealers* or *sistahs)*. As such, these works illustrate the subversive potential of syncretism: a dynamic process which critically appropriates elements from the master-codes of the dominant cultures while 'creolizing' or 'hybridizing' them. By dis-articulating and de-centering the nation's multicultural policy and master-discourses, the so-called minority Others in fact re-articulate and re-centre their diasporic experiences as syncretic acts of resistance.

III. Negotiating Cultural and Hybrid Identities

In "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," Stuart Hall distinguishes two ways of thinking about 'cultural identity.' First, he describes cultural identity as "the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people,' with stable, unchanging, and continuous frames of reference and meaning" (Hall 2003: 234). This type of identification lay at the centre of Pan-African, Pan-Asian or indeed any larger revolutionary movements that were (and

still are) so profoundly connected to transformative political and social forces. As Hall underscores, these more homogenising labels prove(d) essential in the acts of "imaginative rediscovery [...] [and] reunification" as they offered a way of "imposing an imaginary coherence on the experience of dispersal and fragmentation" (ib. 235).

The second type of identity evoked by Hall is unstable, metaphoric, and even contradictory – an identity marked by multiple points of similarities as well as critical aspects of significant difference. Instead of conceiving of identity as a rigid category, Hall proposes to re-imagine identity as "a 'production' which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" (ib. 234):

> Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. [...] Far from being grounded in mere 'recovery' of the past, [...] identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (ib. 236)

In this oft-quoted citation, cultural identities, these "unstable points of identification or suture" (ib. 237), become porous entities, constructed within history and culture.

As a "site of cultural confrontation, possibility for creolization and points of new becomings" (ib.), Hall's definition closely parallels Homi K. Bhabha's concept of hybridity. One of the most widely employed and most disputed terms in postcolonial theory today, 'hybridity' commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zones produced by colonization. (Ashcroft 1999: 118–120). As Bhabha repeatedly claims, one needs to go beyond formulations of cultural imperialism and simplified binarisms. As he contends, all cultural statements and systems are constructed in a contradictory and ambivalent space that he calls the "Third Space of enunciation." Bhabha's concept of hybridity overcomes the exoticism of cultural diversity in favour of a recognition of an empowering hybridity within which cultural difference may operate. (Bhabha 1994: 43–49).

'Diaspora' and 'hybridity' thus offer new ways of transcending national boundaries through their creative articulations of practices that demonstrate possible modes of corroding colonialist enterprises. Yet, the danger consists in the frequent assumption that these terms are inherently subversive and therefore liberating. The mere presence of non-white subjects does not necessarily challenge the would-be homogeneity of whiteness or the essentializing tendencies within traditional pre-modern discourses. The second part of this essay will thus seek to understand how the playwrights under consideration negotiate issues of cultural and hybrid identities within the late Twentieth century Canadian context.

As discussed in the first section of this paper, Bunyan's storyline is constantly interrupted by numerous flashbacks. These memory fragments fill in the silenced history that elapsed during the ten-year gap dividing the play's prologue from the first scene. Interestingly, in addition to challenging traditional dramatic linearity, the play's exploded narrative also symbolically reflects the characters' inner turmoil and fragmented identities. The constant alternation between the protagonists' present predicament and the past memories thus not only emphasizes the work's general theme of disintegration and fragmentation, but also echoes thematic hybridity.

In contrast to her parents, Atiba, who was born in Canada, finds herself in a hyphenated position which best illustrates Bhabha's concept of in-betweenness:

> Should I believe you or mommy? [...] It's like when she says, "eat all your food," and you say, 'Just eat the liver'; or when she says, 'Go to bed at eight o'clock,' and then you tell me, 'Read until nine and do your math' Who should I listen to? (175)

Caught between her mother and father, thus, symbolically, between her ancestral Jamaican roots and her new Canadian environment, Atiba's in-betweenness strongly relates to Bhabha's key concept of hybridity discussed in the introduction.

As the play ends, the eleven-year-old Atiba is left on stage, crying, due to the temporary loss of her mother. Indeed, unable to adapt in Toronto, Gloria decides to go back to her home country,

leaving her daughter and husband behind. The crude ending of Bunyan's play emphasizes the difficulty of negotiating hyphenated identities; a process that often goes hand in hand with suffering and uprootedness. Gloria's radical decision illustrates the fact that some immigrants cannot recreate a sense of home in contemporary multicultural Canada. Others, such as Theo and Atiba, struggle to make sense of their new Canadian environment while trying to negotiate the value of their cultural roots.

In *Baba Jacques*, the main protagonist's crisis of identity is not so much reflected in the play's innovative structure, but rather in a literary device of "mise en abyme," a term originally from the French, meaning "placing into infinity." This deconstructive literary paradigm refers to the type of frame story in which the main narrative can be used to encapsulate some aspects in the framing story. Indeed, the entire play revolves around Binoy's decision to become a writer at a time when Bose himself decided to embark on his passion: writing and staging plays. Thus, the play's protagonist and scenario actually mirror the author himself and his own struggle for recognition as a playwright of South Asian descent.

After travelling to India, Binoy eventually asserts his hybrid Canadian identity: "I'm coming back to Canada, because that's where I belong" (241). In the immigrant context, visible minorities have to fight for both the erasure of a negative 'self' assigned by the power group and the forging of a positive identity. In addition, members of minorities must struggle against the rigidifying identities at work within their own ethnic traditions. Nonetheless, in contrast to *Prodigals*, in *Baba Jacques*, Binoy is able to overcome the complexities of his multiple heritages in a celebration of a hyphenated identity.

As mentioned above, Varma's *Job Stealer* relies on homogenizing labels in an attempt to underline the danger of lumping entire groups of people under single categories. As Hall notes, racist discourses operate "by constructing impassable symbolic boundaries between racially constituted categories, and its typically binary system of representation [which] constantly marks and attempts to fix and naturalize the difference between belongingness and otherness" (Hall 1996: 445).

Job Stealer thus purposefully plays with drastic binary portrayal of refugees/immigrants and Canadian authorities. In this sense, Varma wishes to foreground the limiting ways in which Otherness is generally imagined. The play does not merely constitute an anti-racist discourse, simply resorting to strategies of reversal and inversion, thereby turning colonial discourse upside-down. The play's upright provocative messages, together with its heterogeneous cast of characters, evade such schematic portraying. From their complex in-between position, to borrow Bhabha's terminology, Varma's protagonists navigate in a world of army brutality in their country of origin, to racist medical and immigration officers in Canada. In their abilities to oscillate from exploitative and victimized positions, to a positive affirmation of their value, the refugees powerfully illustrate the complex process of negotiation involved in diasporic experiences.

Finally, as mentioned above, *sistahs* reinforces the idea of transformation, an idea that is encapsulated in the cooking metaphor. Besides, the clashing conversations between Sandra and Rea, foreground the hybridized status of the women's present predicament. While Sandra desperately tries to re-capture an idealized past – "I want the soup to [...] taste exactly like back home" (316) – Rea, insists that "Things change. The food doesn't even come from the same place. You've romanticized this back home" (317). Indeed, Rea's arguments reveal what Stuart Hall calls the "end of innocence:" "There can be no simple 'return' or 'recovery' of the ancestral past which is not re-experienced through the categories of the present" (Hall 1996: 448). As Maufort claims, "the soup will have to be adjusted, hybridized, to suit contemporary North American experiences" (Maufort 2004: 64). Likewise, by purposefully hybridizing the Trinidian recipe, Rea has symbolically re-asserted her identity as "half black half Indian" (319).

sistahs thus calls for a complex redefinition of Black identities. Written by a British-born Barbadian-Canadian, maxine bailey, and by a Jamaican-Canadian, sharon lewis, the play's dual authorship already evades categorization. Furthermore, similarly to *Job Stealers*' heterogeneous cast of characters, *sistahs*'s protagonists belong to numerous cultural backgrounds, thereby further exploding any

possibility of essentialist classification. Whether the protagonists are from West Africa, Jamaica, Trinidad or of mixed race – Rea, for instance is a "Dougla. Half black half Indian" (319) – the play constitutes an illustration of the extreme heterogeneity of the Afri-Canadian community. So, even though broad labels, such as Afri-Canadian, are crucial as unifying political and social forces, one needs to recognize, as Hall points out, the extraordinary diversity of the subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which comprise the category labelled as 'Black.'

In this contemporary context of globalizing economic and social spheres, Hall's concept of cultural identity and Bhabha's post-colonial theories become essential tools: they enable the reader to conceive of identities as a positive affirmation of the diasporic self. Whether the protagonists decide to escape Canada – like Gloria in *Prodigals* – or manage to negotiate the complexities of their hyphenated self – as is the case in *Baba Jacques*, *Job Stealers* or *sisthas* – each playwright suggests different ways to solve cultural and hybrid identities.

IV. Conclusions

As examples of a trend that emerged in the 1980s, the riveting plays selected in this essay refuse to represent the Caribbean and South East Asian experiences as monolithic, self-contained or sexually stabilized; as solely positive or negative experiences. Rather, these four works depict the Caribbean Canadian and South Asian Canadian experiences as diasporic. From their specific "position of enunciation," the playwrights articulate facets of the "process of cultural diasporaization" (Hall 1996: 447). Indeed, in all these plays, the authors unsettle, recombine and hybridize master narratives by connecting them to the complex systems of representation and aesthetic traditions from Asian and African cultures.

The diaspora experience, as Hall articulates, "is defined, not by essence or purity, but by a recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*" (Hall 2003: 244).

While only representing a small fragment of the South Asian Canadian and Afro-Canadian communities, the case studies discussed in this paper highlight the tensions and boundaries existing not only at the border of geo-political spaces or nations, but also within individuals and communities. Bunyan's *Prodigals*, Bose's *Baba Jacques*, Varma's *Job Stealer* and bailey and lewis's *sistahs* urge us to re-theorize "how to represent a non-coercive and a more diverse conception of ethnicity" (Hall 1996: 447). New hybrid forms of cultural identities are created *inside*, in what Homi Bhabha has called the 'interstice' or in-between space in which these emerging identities are constantly and often positively re-invented in the Canadian postcolonial context. Therefore, these plays not only characterize a relation to the nation, but also demand that one consider the complex range of collective and individual responses to the everyday experience of Blackness/ South Asianness in contemporary Canada. They invite us to explore emerging new forms of muti-culturality by re-imagining hybrid and diasporic Canadian identities.

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Narrativisation of Identity in the Novels of the 18th Century

LIISA SAARILUOMA

Since the 1980s, the claim that identity and narrative form have to be thought together has been repeated often enough not only among the literary scholars but also by the representatives of historical research and social scientists to make it look like a natural way of seeing the matter. Collective identities are thought to be defined by "grand narratives" which legitimize a social system and its functioning (cf. Lyotard 1979). Historians who consider themselves providing this kind of legitimizing stories are, then, often inclined to think of their stories being constructed in a form comparable to the fictional stories of a novelist (cf. e.g. Jenkins 1995; Carr 1991). In sociological or in cultural anthropological research, collecting autobiographical stories has become a common method to find out how "ordinary people", or a certain ethnic or social group, think of themselves; even a therapeutic function has today been rather commonly assigned to telling one's life story and finding thus out who one is. In literary research and criticism, stories of claiming or of searching for an identity are seen as a "normal" case in contemporary (serious) fiction.

The theoretical work of, e.g., Hayden White, Jean-Francois Lyotard and Paul Ricoeur (cf. White 1973; Lyotard 1979; Ricoeur 1983–85) seem to make the legitimizing and identifying function of a narrative unquestionable. In the reception of these and some other theoreticians it often seems as if the connection between narrative and identity would be seen as a natural, necessary and generally valid one. Several others, like Charles Taylor, Odo Marquard, Anthony Giddens, S.J.Schmidt or Hans-Robert Jauss (Taylor 1989; Marquard

1979; Giddens 1991; Schmidt 1989; Jauss 1988) however, think that the whole question of identity, as we understand it, has its place only in the historical period that can be called modernity. This period begins an the end of the 18th century, with the late Enlightenment and the first waves of the Romantic movement, when not only the political scene was completely changed by the abolition of the aristocratic privileges and establishing the modern state consisting of citizens who are equal before the law, but also the concepts of man, history, subjectivity and individuality are changed. Whereas in the pre-modern world, history had been a stock of exemplary stories uncovering eternal truths about man and the way of the world, being always able to be repeated, history from now on is seen as a unique process in which the future considerably differs from the past and in which man can participate struggling to change the state of affairs in the pursuit of his own and his fellowmen's happiness (cf., e.g., Koselleck 1985). The world is thus temporalized in a manner that would have been inconceivable before. For all of this, man himself had to change: neither could he be seen determined in his essence as a part of a unchangeable metaphysical order any more, but he could be identified only through his acts and his inner life, in his particular, historically determined being. As Odo Marquard remarks, the modern concept of identity is in a transformation of what remains of the pre-modern concepts of essence and telos (Marquard 1979: 358). A human being has to live without a predestined plan for living (Wesensplan), without an essence given a priori; instead, he or she has to find out what this individual, concrete being is that he considers as him/herself (ib. 359). The self of a modern human being is individual in the sense that he or she cannot be reduced to any general natural essence of man or to any set of norms. The definition of one's self is achieved only reflexively in the sense that a person has to define his/her identity without recurrence to any extra-human, extra-individual basis of legitimization (cf. Schmidt 1989: 99). He or she has to look for his/her story in order to see and to say what he/she is (ib. 92, Ehrich-Haefeli 1987: 49, Taylor 1989: 289). Only in the modernity, the identity of a human being is thus temporalized and narrativized in a strict sense.

My aim in this paper is to pinpoint some concrete steps in the development of literary characterization during the 18th century, as it advances from the classicistic doctrine of the conservation of characters to the modern narrativized and temporalized identity of a person. Showing this development underlines the importance of historical accuracy as discussing the connection of narrative and identity.

The doctrine of the conservation of characters in the classicistic poetics of the 18th century required that in a literary work of art the characters remain the same; in other words, everyone has to act consistently in accordance with his or her character throughout the work. E.g., Lessing writes in his *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (1767–69) that the characters "must always be uniform, always remain as they are"; "a Turkish despot must, even if he is in love, remain a Turk and a despot" (Lessing 1968: 325). In the characters, general human traits or traits typical of certain kinds of humans are shown, so that the reader can learn by their example about the human nature.

We can follow the narratives of the 18th century development in which this conception, originating from the ancient poetics, is replaced by a modern one. For the heroic-gallant romance of the baroque, still widely read in the first half of the 18th century in France, Germany or England, even if these romances originate from the 17th century, the determination of the identity of the characters was opposite to what we consider as valid for modern novels. Instead of showing the identity of a character developing or becoming defined only through his or her own story, it is required from a character in a baroque romance that he or she is strictly defined according to the code or moral virtues and vices and will remain exactly the same throughout the story. The heroes and heroines incorporate the impeccable examples of virtue, whereas the villains of the story shall correspondingly give the exemplary models of vice. As W. Frick puts it, the world in the baroque novels is fully defined in its contents through the metaphysical interpretation of world prior to any empirical knowledge of events (Frick 1988: 44). The novel consists of a "poetic mimesis" of the "metaphysical structure of the world" (ib. 344). One could talk about the transcendent fixation of characters, because the character of a person is not determined in this

particular story (cf. Schmidt 1989: 99). In this kind of character determination, no problem of self-reflection exists, because a person has the same metaphysical essence for him/herself as for anybody else. On the whole, there exists no problem of discovering the character of a particular person, because the exemplary "contents" of his or her character had to be evident throughout the story.

All this changes in the modernity since the end of the 18th century. The modernization of the determination of identity of a person brings forth a change at least at three important points: First, the identity of a person is form now on understood individually. Something that is individual cannot actually ever be determined by defining one's general, metaphysical essence. The labeling of a person as a bundle of well-known human character traits and virtues or vices does not, then, do any more. Individuum est ineffabile, the individual cannot be defined by general terms of language. But the individuality can be indicated by referring to particular acts and situations in which some aspects of the thinking, the feelings and the relations of a person to other people are thought to be caught, and this can be used as materials for building a synthetic picture of his or her individuality. The empiricalization and immanentization of defining what a person is of which Frick talks about (Frick 1988: 40, 500) means also that the individual identity of a human being has to be conceived dynamically, as a process. In other words, a human being does not have any unalterable identity that could be fixed forever, but what a person is changes with new experiences and acts and must therefore be defined again and again. The defining of the identity of a human being which is individual and processual presupposes self-reflexivity. A person can be for him/herself something that is individual but definite only, if he or she makes of him/herself a picture, or rather a narrative, since the individual identity is defined and re-defined in time. This requires the ability to make a difference between the former and the later identity, to look at his/her acts from different viewpoints and to discern what comes from the "inside" from what comes from the "outside" in one's actions and passions, in his/her goals and plans. In order to be able to determine his or her identity, the individual human being must be

able to take distance from the immediately given and reflect his/her actions and passions in temporally different locations.

In the new, bourgeois novels of the 18th century, introduced by the English novelists Defoe, Richardson and Fielding, the determination of the characters does not change principally. In spite of the proximity of the world of these novels to the everyday life and of the sense for realistic detail, as Ian Watt and the research tradition following him has shown (cf. Watt 1981), these are still didactic-exemplary stories. Let us take the example of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), which in spite of the adventurousness of its contents and the exotic milieus, has been considered as the beginning of the modern bourgeois novel. This is adequate in so far, as Robinson escapes all exotics on the uninhabited island, where he has been driven to live totally on his own, by 'normalizing' the activities in this exceptional loneliness to what is the accustomed life of an European colonizer. Thus, he reproduces on this lonely island not only the 'normal' agricultural activities, accommodations and economic planning typical of the contemporary Europe, but also all the typical European mental discipline with a regular weekly studying of Bible etc. The novel serves an exceptional 'true history' for the readers and pays much attention to the details of Robinson's everyday life on his lonely island, differing in this, of course, profoundly from the anti-empirical, metaphysical orientation of the Baroque novels. Still, the empirical orientation does not bring forth a new orientation in seeking values and identities for man, but the novel carries on the clear moral message of the traditional exemplary novels. Telling the story has an exhortative, truly Christian aim, even if suited for the new type of capitalist colonizer, and it is in no way a story of a deviating individuality.

The novel starts with the account of the narrator, i.e. the protagonist himself, of his family background and of the warnings of his father about his going to sea. The father predicts that if Robinson is not content with the peaceful living in his hometown prepared for him by his parents, he will be denied God's blessing:

> though he [the father] said he would not cease to pray for me, yet he would venture to say to me, that if I did take this foolish step, God would not bless me – and I would

> have leisure hereafter to reflect upon having neglected his counsel, when there might be none to assist in my recovery (Defoe: 18).

This prediction comes true, Robinson thinks, as he is condemned to lead his life on an uninhabited island. His misdeed, i.e. his moral failure, of not obeying his parents had thus brought forth – even if on a higher, moral-theological and not on a natural-causal level – his fate. This is not valid in the contrary way, i.e., his 'fate' – his adventures and experiences – do not mold his ways of acting of thinking. The 29-year-long stay on the uninhabited island does not have any impact on his character: instead of developing in the loneliness a new way of seeing thing and of living, he reproduces there a copy of the European civilization. Robinson is on the whole not seen as an individuated person; rather, the charm of the character for the readers lies in his being an everyman in whom the lonely struggle for life of all of us is depicted under extreme circumstances is depicted – but circumstances in which we still can (allegorically) discern our own loneliness in the new world of capitalist enterprise.

In Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), the events and the movements of mind of the female protagonist are depicted in her letters to her parents with an unprecedented minuteness in a situation, in which she tries to escape the advances of a seducer. The richness of detail in the description of the inner life must, however, not be identified with the individualization of the personality. Pamela is no more an individual personality than Robinson. The sense her story makes lies rather in that it depicts an exemplary situation – that of resisting the advances of a seducer even under the circumstance that the seducer comes from the upper class and the distressed girl is his servant – so minutely, that it will not be difficult for the female readers to apply the information delivered into corresponding situations in their own lives. This didactic-practical function of Richardson's novels is emphasized in the wish of Dr. Johnson that an index should be added to *Clarissa,* the second, extraordinary large novel Richardson's, in order to make it easier for the (female) readers to find the relevant passages (Schönert 1969: 84).

The object of the meticulous study in *Pamela* is the virtuous behavior of a female person, not the individual personality of the

female protagonist. The 'virtue' (that is, diverting the efforts of the seducer) is the most important thing for her:

> Oh my dear mother, I am miserable! truly miserable! But yet, don't be frightened, I am honest! And I hope God, of his goodness, will keep me so! (Richardson 1980: 53)

Indeed, the virtue of the heroine is rated higher than any other of her personal attributes, her happiness or even her life. This is shown in a letter of the father to Pamela:

> If then, you love *us*, if you wish for *God*'s blessing, and *your own* future happiness, we charge you to stand upon your guard; and, if you find the least thing that looks like a design upon your virtue, be sure you leave every thing behind you, and come away to us; for we had rather see you all covered with rags, and even follow you to the church yard, than have it said, a child of ours preferred any worldly conveniences to her virtue. (Ib. 46)

Blamelessness, that is, a total accommodation to the valid social and moral norms, seems generally to be the highest female virtue in the literature of the 18th century – think only about the heroines of Fielding, Fanny Burney or Sophie von La Roche. "Interesting" female characters, that is, characters that in their personality show a deviation from the norms, like Jenny or Mme de Warens in Fielding's *Tom Jones*, are suspicious. Even the deviation from the norms by a male person is seen in the Enlightenment, when not as vicious, still as a source of comic (cf., e.g., Michelsen 1962). Scurrilous types with peculiar "hobby-horses" are encountered with, following Fielding and Sterne, not only in the English but also, e.g., in the German novels of the late 18th century.

The first novelist to see the personality in the modern, individual sense, disconnected from all exemplariness and the ideal of man, is Goethe in *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). Werther confronts as an individual the rigid and schematic social norms. What he is, he does not discover by comparing himself with an ideal or with some general norms, but what he is as an individual, he will feel

immediately in himself. Especially favorable for discovering one's inner self is to be surrounded by the free nature, because here one can feel oneself, disconnected from the nuisances of society, as a part of the creative nature: "I come back to myself, and I find a world!" (Goethe 1982a: 13) In this inner world, Werther feels happiness and freedom. At the highest he values in himself his heart, which he feels to be the actual abode of his individuality:

> the heart, my only pride, the only source of everything, of all strength, all happiness and all misery. Oh, what I know, may everyone know as well – my heart belongs only to myself. (Ib. 74)

Thus, in *Werther*, individualization of identity has taken place. However, the individuality is not yet temporalized and thus either narrativized: in other words, Werther is in no need of the story of his experiences, his acts and his passions, in order to be able to grasp his own individual identity, but this is all the time immediately present and accessible for him. He only needs to have a look at his heart to discover what he actually is. No self-reflection or reflection on others is necessary, but what man really is is given for one with immediate certainty.

It is interesting to compare this self-recognition to the recognition of others. Verena Ehrich-Haefeli quotes from the passage in which Werther concludes that his efforts to characterize Lotte to his friend by general classifying concepts or even by attributes that complete one another must fail and then endeavours to characterize her by describing different individual scenes instead in which he thinks she acts in a characteristic manner. "Even if one is unable to catch a person as an individual being, as individuality, through general concepts, one still is able to *tell about* him or her, to let him or her appear in a series of situations of which each helps to characterize him or her." (Ehrich-Haefeli 1987: 55; transl. L. S.). For one who participates in these situations these might provide moments of immediate intuition in which the other person's innermost feelings and his or her innermost being are uncovered. So is the scene in which Lotte as the eldest shares the bread for her younger sisters and brothers, or the moment in which Lotte after the thunderstorm sighs

the name 'Klopstock' and Werther understands which poem she is thinking about and thus how she feels. – It is interesting to notice that 'immediate feeling' or intuition often is contaminated by a literary source. So is the situation in the first part of the novel, when Werther walks in the nature with Homer in his hand and is delighted as he thinks to have the experience of simple natural living himself that Homer describes. He does not himself notice in this a sign of the fact that the way in which he experience nature is always culturally mediated. The immediateness of experience is for him not questionable; neither is the identity of one's self seen as something that is constituted in time.

It is interesting to compare this to Rousseau's idea of personal identity in his non-fictional *Confessions* (1782–88). Also for Rousseau, a human being is what he or she is in his or her innermost self; and the Jean-Jacques of *Confessions* is in opposition to a civilized society altogether and demands to be acknowledged as an individual. Differently from *Werther,* the narrator presents himself in a temporal line through the different experiences and deeds of a life time. Does this mean that by Rousseau the identity of a person has become temporalized and can be sought only in the narrative of one's life, consisting of his/her different actions and passions in different stages of his/her life? In other words, has the modern, reflective and temporalized view of determining the identity of a character, that can be depicted only through a narrative, been brought forth here?

The purpose of Rousseau's confessions is to expose himself to the reading public totally free from any conventions and exactly by this sincerity to justify his being as he is – because sincerity is for him the most important virtue. Even if he has committed some mean acts which he openly confesses – like stealing a ribbon a maid was accused of and sacked for – he thinks he has the decisive virtue of having a heart full of sentiments of being absolutely sincere. From the point of view of our question it is crucial that even if Rousseau emphasizes the differences between himself and all other people, he makes no efforts to define his individuality, but always sticks to the general concepts of 'virtue' and 'vice', with which he measures his own deeds and his character (he assures to be "the best of human beings" ("le meilleur des hommes"; Rousseau 1957: 517). The wish to

be able to narrate his tale absolutely sincerely and with all the relevant details in it, does not serve to the purpose to find out by narrating his story what kind of human being he is, but to expose himself to the readers:

> I would like to promise to describe myself exactly as I am [...] I would like to make my soul transparent for the eyes of the reader, and that's why I strive to depict it from all points of view, in all different lights, to achieve that no movement in it escapes unnoticed by the reader [...] It is the task of the reader to gather all these materials and to determine the character that is brought forth by them. It is no matter of mine to determine the meaning of the facts; I have to tell them all und let the reader make the choice [...]. (Ibid., 104–5)

Thus, the author does not narrate his life story for himself but for the readers, so that they can at every moment of his life see, what kind of a man he was. (It is the hypochondriac and paranoid Rousseau that felt this kind of justification being necessary.) For himself there exists no need to look in his story for defining what he is – a good, sensitive soul.

It was only in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1795–96) – this is my thesis –, that the modern view of narrative determination of character is brought forth. The narrator is not the hero himself but an "omniscient" narrator (as the narrator of the *Apprenticeship* is customarily but somewhat misleadingly called) who, however, does not give any description of Wilhelm's character. In the first chapter, Wilhelm is characterized as the "young, sensitive, immature son of a businessman" (Goethe 1982b: 8), but not by the narrator himself but by the old Barbara, the servant of Mariane, who would prefer seeing her mistress in the arms of another lover from whom some material benefit could be expected. Her opinion about Wilhelm is thus very one-sided and does not help the reader to acknowledge what kind of character Wilhelm is. Following this, the reader gets acquainted with the manner in which Wilhelm sees himself: In his love to the actress Mariane he thinks to face an opportunity for himself to start a carrier on stage. He shall now fulfill

his childhood dreams of educating the public by theatre and possibly of founding a national theatre. From this perspective he now sees his whole life as preparation for a theatrical career, and from this perspective he tells his beloved about his earliest theatre plays. Similarly, he thinks he is now able to see clearly what his future will be like; his love to Mariane seems to him to be a height from which he can clearly see the whole of his life embracing both past and future:

> "It is a beautiful feeling, dear Mariane", Wilhelm answered, "to think back to old times and old harmless mistakes, especially when we do it in a moment when we have luckily reached a height, from which can see the landscape and the road which we have traveled. It is so pleasant to look self-contentedly back at the numerous hindrances, which we used, with a painful feeling, to consider as invincible, and to compare that, what we are now, developed, with what we were then, undeveloped." (Ib. 16–17)

However, the reader has already a good reason to doubt that Wilhelm will not be successful in pursuing his goals – because the reader knows from the very beginning that Mariane is not exactly what Wilhelm thinks her to be, since she has another lover who will return in two weeks. Thus Wilhelm has no reason for the self-contentedness, which is grounded on the idea that he knows what his call is and how to see his life as a meaningful whole. Actually, when Wilhelm hears about Mariane's treachery, he forsakes her and abandons all his plans concerning a theatrical career. With that, the way Wilhelm sees his life as a whole is transformed: instead of seeing in himself a founder of the national theatre *in spe* he now sees in his theatrical plans vain dreams which have nothing to do with reality. He picks with resignation again up his career as a businessman.

Thus, understanding oneself is in the *Apprenticeship* identical with knowing the plot of one's life, or knowing how the meaningful narrative whole of one's life is constructed. A human being is sought in his/her life – and the person must him/herself be the one who

defines his/her identity. The identity must be discovered by the person him/herself in that this discovery would offer the person a ground to make decisions concerning his or her future activities. *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* is as a whole a description of how Wilhelm makes several times the effort to understand his life as a meaningful whole, in other words, to construct the meaningful story of his life, in order to be able to find out who he is.

The heavy loss of Mariane is followed by a phase of aimless wandering about. This comes to an end with Wilhelm's second attempt to make sense of his life as a whole. This happens again in connection with the theatre; but this time it is not the public that shall be educated by him, but, on the contrary, he sees in theatre a medium for himself to develop his own personality. In the new story about his life he tells himself now, his 'Bildung' has a central role, and theatre is seen only as a medium for it. However, Wilhelm must soon give up also this construction, as he notices that theatre cannot serve to this goal either. In the end of the novel, he sees in his life nothing but errors and feels totally at a loss, even desperate. The novel comes to an end – and to a happy one, because Wilhelm is going to marry Natalie –, before he has made a further effort to understand himself by constructing the story of his life. There is, however, no doubt that he is going to do that, because the last parts of the novel contain numerous life stories of other characters, offering him thus a pattern to follow in constructing the story of his life (for a more elaborated analysis, see Saariluoma 2004).

Thus, the temporalization of defining the identity of a character has taken place in *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.* The identity of the hero is defined reflexively by the numerous particulars of his experience, through his own efforts to construct a meaningful story of his life. How is this narrative constructed? Wilhelm must think about his deeds and actions, about the reactions of other people to his actions, about his motives, feelings and aims. The different stories about his life show that it is not possible to include "everything" in a life story and show everything in "all different lights", as Rousseau wanted to do, but it depends on the perspective which events are chosen, which aspects of the events are depicted and how they are interpreted. In addition to that, as life goes on, every new experience

opens up the possibility of a new interpretation of what has happened before. This means that constructing the sense of life of an individual never comes to a close, nor will the identity of a character ever be definitively fixed; rather, defining one's life as well as one's identity appear as a never-ending process. The insight into the non-ending of these definition processes is typically modern.

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The Creation of the Comic and the Tragicomic through Suspense in the Works of William Faulkner

LAURI PILTER

Introduction

For the wide public, William Faulkner has the reputation of being a writer of the macabre and the overcomplicated – accordingly he is seen as providing little room for the comic and the humorous. Experts of Faulkner have achieved a different opinion. For most of them, the writer appears not only as a master tragedian but also a supreme humorist, mingling the serious and the laughable in countless surprising proportions and combinations. The scholars Hans Bungert, James Mellard and Ryuichi Yamaguchi have each written monographies about the humorous in Faulkner's novels. Each of them has a distinctly different approach: Bungert rather specifically focuses on the influences of the 19th century low-life tall tale humour; Mellard often bases his approaches on the post-Freudian structuralist semantics of Jacques Lacan; for Yamaguchi, the central term concerning humour is "bizarre" as opposed to "the terrible".

It is known Faulkner had studied Henri Bergson whose essay on the comic, "Laughter", with its main reliance on French classicist theories of literature, could definitely outline some but not all characteristics of Faulkner's comic. As a basically self-educated man, Faulkner most likely wrote in a combination of following literary theories and of a surge of spontaneity; beginning with *The*

Sound and the Fury, his practise of new literary techniques seemed to precede any theoretical calculations.

Immanuel Kant has defined laughter as "an affection arising from a strained expectation being suddenly reduced to nothing. This very reduction, at which certainly understanding cannot rejoice, is still indirectly a source of very lively enjoyment for a moment" (Kant 1992: 199). The sensing of comic therefore may be seen as a self-repetitive process of the expectations of the conscious suddenly going blank, falling into a hiatus. The sublime which, when united with beauty, constitutes tragedy (ib. 190), brings along, according to Kant, also a blank in the consciousness – "because the mind has been incited to abandon sensibility, and employ itself upon ideas involving higher finality" (ib. 92) – a blank which leads to the perception of some higher truth.

Combining these definitions in an elementary way, the tragicomic may be defined as an expectation dwindled into nothing and thereby leading to some higher truth.

By the same criteria, the comic, the tragic and the tragicomic all have to do with suspense and the following relief, with climaxes and anti-climaxes.

Moments of Arrest in Shakespeare and in Faulkner

In the famous monologue of Act One, Scene 7 of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the title villain expresses his moral tremors preceding the murder of King Duncan in a collection of rhetorically organized images.

> If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
> It were done quickly. If th'assassination
> Could trammel up the consequence and catch
> With his surcease, success, that but this blow
> Might be the be-all and the end-all – here,
> But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
> We'd jump the life to come.
> /---/

Besides, this Duncan

> Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
> So clear in his great office, that his virtues
> Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongu'd against
> The deep damnations of his taking-off.
> And pity, like a naked newborn babe
> Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin hors'd
> Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
> Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
> That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
> To prick the sides of my intent, but only
> Vaulting ambition /---/ (Shakespeare 2001: 19).

One of the long soliloquies of Shakespeare's tragic characters, this poetical confession does not carry any action in the strict sense but is meant to convey invisible processes – first, occurrences behind the scene and second, the process within the character's soul. It is a momentary stop in the quick activities on stage, a stop full of the dynamism of psychic powers. It is tragic and evidently meant to be nothing but tragic. But if a criminal in life, in a police documentary or even in a detective movie poured forth a passage like this before committing his murder, the effect would most likely produce irresistible laughter because of its utter incompatibility with what is usually seen as the squalor of criminal life. Thus soliloquies like this are not only a stop in the activities of the drama but are rocketed away from the predictable fabric of usual human life in general, orbiting it in partial defiance of its rules and regulations.

In the present work, an attempt will be made to give a name, hiatus, to such self-dependent collections of rhetorical images which slow down the action and momentarily flash in the hidden psychic landscape. Studying the works of William Faulkner, hiatuses can be seen as a definitive factor of the tragicomic tonality of his fiction. The plot of a prose narrative always resembles a play. Hiatuses fill a contradictory function, both lessening and increasing the dramatic qualities of the work of fiction. Being stops in the plot, they slow down the action. However, as outpourings of the narrator's imaginative energy they resemble the verbal fabric of a drama. Though not dialogue in the straight sense, a hiatic passage often

represents a kind of telepathic dialogue of the narrating character with the readers (=audience). As pools of "frozen" energy and dynamics, not relatable to any particular action, hiatuses give an additional weight to the effects of the plot. Viewable as lyrical interludes in the narrative, by their context hiatuses play a complex lyrical-epical-dramatic role in creating the impression of the primeval unity of literary genres. The decision as to whether a hiatus serves a tragic or a comic function nearly always depends on the scale of the context, and the scale in Faulkner is nearly always twofold.

The "Frozen Movement" Qualities in Faulkner

In an article titled "Frozen Movement in *Light in August*", Darrel Abel has pointed out the quality in Faulkner's prose of not presenting static entities, but instead presenting motion, "reality in flux" (Abel 1957: 33) at arrested instants. Abel's argument is based on Henri Bergson's work "The Creative Mind", in which the artistic intuition of the whole and of eternity is contrasted with intelligence which "starts ordinarily from the immobile, and reconstructs movement as best it can with immobilities in juxtaposition" (cited in: ib. 32). Abel writes: "If Faulkner has, as I think, a similar conception of reality in flux, and a similar theory of the imaginative writer's gift and function, his technique must master a paradox: in order to fix reality in a literary construct, it must freeze movement" (ib. 33). Abel's argument is related to Jean-Paul Sartre's opinions expressed in his essay "Time in Faulkner", from which the American scholar uses quotes. Abel refers to Bergson as saying that intuition "will have to use ideas as a conveyance" (cited in: ib. 33) and that "/n/o image will replace the intuition of duration /---/, but many different images /---/ will be able, through the convergence of their action, to direct the consciousness to the precise point where there is a certain intuition to seize on" (cited in: ib. 33).

In the present work, the collections of images conveying a sense of the "frozen movement", or reality in flux, will be viewed as entities emerging either in figures of speech or as episodes (the latter

less focused upon in this article). The relation of the sense of "frozen movement" to the sense of the tragicomic will be analyzed. The name of hiatus belongs to the entity conveying the sense of "frozen movement".

Definition of Hiatus

The word "hiatus" comes from the Latin verb *hiare*, meaning "to yawn". The traditional meaning of hiatus in English is "blank space". In linguistics, the word denotes the juxtaposition of two vowels, one at the end of a word and the other at the beginning of the next word. In that sense, the word hiatus was first used in ancient Roman discipline of rhetoric.

One of the meanings of the word, according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, is "an interruption in time or continuity" (Webster 1987: 569). For the purpose of this study, hiatus is used as a term marking relative interruptions in the straight continuity of the narrative, and is given a meaning related to the category of figures of speech. **A hiatus is a withholding of the progressive information of the linear narrative through visual or otherwise graphic images and collective metaphors or similes, a withholding often with the deliberate purpose of heightening the dramatic pitch of the narrative**. It is a step outside the story-line, a suspension of action, revealing the hidden dynamism of the moment. A hiatus may involve the use of various figures of speech. Most usually, it is the use of metaphors or similes with the additional effect directly or indirectly related to hyperbole (an exaggerated or extravagant statement), litotes (a deliberate understatement or denial of the contrary), aporia (a true or feigned doubt or deliberation about an issue) or prosopopoeia (representing an imaginary or absent person as speaking or acting; or attributing life, speech or animate qualities to dumb or inanimate objects). **Otherwise, the hiatus may be defined as a unit, either on the level of style, imagery or episodes, that involves a climax (ascendance of interest and emotional response) and a following anti-climax (sudden change from the expected to an unexpected significance).**

The Quality of Oscillation in the Comic

According to Immanuel Kant, "/a/ joke must have something in it capable of momentarily deceiving us. Hence, when the semblance vanishes into nothing, the mind looks back in order to try it over again, and thus by a rapidly succeeding tension and relaxation it is jerked to and fro and put in oscillation" (Kant 1992: 201). As oscillations between the suspense of expectations and relief, the comic in this philosophical sense resembles music: "Music /---/ and what provokes laughter are two kinds of play with aesthetic ideas, or even with representations of the understanding, by which, all said and done, nothing is thought. By mere force of change they yet are able to afford lively gratification" (ib. 198). Kant's considerations shed a light also to interpreting the meaning of comic in Faulkner's works: just as it is needless or superfluous about a piece of instrumental music to ask what the composer "means by this", it is needless or superfluous to ask about Faulkner's surprising images, turns of style or seemingly deviant episodes what the author has meant by them, why he has put them into the narrative. The very intention of such devices is to create the interplay of suspense and relief by presenting hiatuses in perception, sensations of blankness which nevertheless contain something. That quality of oscillations between suspense and relief is what constitutes the overall comic and tragicomic fabric of Faulkner's oeuvre.

Definition of the Tragicomic

Contrary to the traditional assumptions based on the classifications of Aristotle and the doctrines of the theoreticians of the French classicist drama, the line between the comic and the tragic was never very clear even in ancient Greek plays. The speculations of the porter in *Macbeth* and the jokes of the fool in *King Lear* are often referred to as classic examples of tragicomedy, but Shakespeare was not the first one to provoke laughter at sad or terrible scenes or engender fear in a humorous plot. The ancient Greek tragic performances with the trilogy of tragedies followed by a shorter, humorous satyr's play

were intended to meet the spectators' expectations both for the heart-rending and the humorous. Even such an embodiment of high tragic qualities as Sophocles's *King Oedipus* includes comic moments, as when the messenger announces the "good" news of old king Laius's death to Oedipus in light-hearted rhymes (Lill on June 21st, 2006). As a term in its own right, removed from the definitions of genres, **the tragicomic means the startling, often nearly paralyzing surprise at the recognition of a hidden truth**.

The Tragicomic Method of Hiatus

Faulkner's methods of hiatus often result in tragicomic effects, as the density of words and images leave the unsaid loom with enormous graphic visuality, thus probing the powers and limits of the comprehension of human imagination. Each new tragicomic discovery produced by hiatus resembles the impact of the story of King Oedipus (in the epistemological, not in the pan-erotic interpretation), with the focus on the jeopardies of the process of understanding and on the tragic fallacies inherent to learning.

The Dramatic Qualities in Faulkner

Faulkner's novels doubtless evoke comparison with high dramas of world literature as in both the role of a straight narrative, so univocally prevalent in what is popularly understood by "fiction", is definitively subjugated to other functions such as poetic suggestiveness including verbally created visual effects, and philosophical knots of plot by their shocking suspense and surprises resembling such exercises of paradoxical logic as *King Oedipus* of Sophocles. Faulkner's novels could also be seen as verbally conveyed movies, with the pervasive trait of a dramatically engaging introspection never to such a degree attainable in films. All Faulkner's novels are "tragicomedies" in the same sense as Shakespeare's plays, both his high tragedies and even the lighter comedies blend, in different proportions, the comic and the tragic; therefore Faulkner's books

could be separated into "light" tragicomedies (e. g. *As I Lay Dying*, *Intruder in the Dust*, *The Reivers*) and "dark" tragicomedies or comitragedies (e. g. *The Sound and the Fury*, *Absalom, Absalom!*).

But of course the parallel with classical dramas cannot be employed without reservations. Certainly Faulkner's works can be read as a substitute for the genre called reading dramas. However, by his main strengths Faulkner was a poet-novelist, and the role of the plot for him never was as dominant, as transparently definitive as with playwrights. It is thus not solely by the turns of the plot that Faulkner's comic and tragicomic effects should be analyzed. It is not only the ridiculousness of a character, a sentence, a situation or an event that evokes the laughter. The sense of tragicomedy in Faulkner often emerges in passages readable as expressions of the author's lyrical self, introspectively observing a particular vision from behind the mask of a particular character. What is often both funny and scary in Faulkner is merely how he has worded a description. In his "The Meaning of Form in *The Sound and the Fury*", Donald M. Kartiganer views the narrative structure of the novel as based on Bergsonian principles: "For Bergson the analytic mind is capable of the "ingenious arrangement of immobilities",, (Kartiganer 1987: 373). It is in the depictions of "frozen movement", uniting a still-stand with dynamic force, similar to certain bas-reliefs of ancient temple friezes, that as striking synthesis of the awesome (characteristic of tragedy) and the lucrative is achieved in Faulkner. The words conveying such a movement seem both groping and hitting their aim, and their visible concreteness and graphic precision simultaneously raise a silent puzzle of how much of the material world really can be sensed and how much of it adequately conveyed in words.

Such depictions, often involving an intricate sequence of association, belong to the class of images called hiatus in this study. They illuminate the imagination while leaving the reason blank and bewildered. They are like delving into another reality solely constituted of words, a reality in which the representativeness of language meets its high end and also its ultimate limits.

Methods of Hiatus in *As I Lay Dying* (1930)

In his work "William Faulkner and Bruno Schulz. A Comparative Study", the Polish scholar Zbigniew Maszewski writes about *As I Lay Dying*: "/In that novel/ the essence of life is metamorphosis, migration of forms and "the bare fact of separate individual existence holds an irony, a hoax, a clown's stuck-out tongue" [*Letters and Drawings of Bruno Schulz with Selected Prose* 113]" (Maszewski 2003: 141). Louise Gossett says of the plot of the book: "The series of accidents out of which Faulkner builds the funeral trip is a parade of human and natural disasters" (Gossett 1965: 33). About the central family in the book Maszewski writes: "Frozen into a mechanism that keeps them moving and talking, the Bundrens repeat acts of watching each other's marionette-like, uncanny, repetitious gestures of rubbing their knees, fanning, hammering, lifting their hands, spitting into the dust" (Maszewski 2003: 137).The novel abounds in groupings of metaphors or similes occurring at crucial moments and intensifying the impact of the action. By their precision these episodes resemble etchings, while their boldness leaves the impression of a free-hand drawing.

An example from page 9 (Faulkner 2004), containing the very word used in present terminology, presents nearly all the characteristics of the concept:

> They stand in rigid terrific hiatus, the horse trembling and groaning. Then Jewel is on the horse's back. He flows upward in a stooping swirl like the lash of a whip, his body in mid-air shaped to the horse. For another moment the horse stands spraddled, with lowered head, before it bursts into motion. They descend the hill in a series of spine-bolting jumps, Jewel high, leech-like on the withers, to the fence where the horse bunches to a scuttering halt again.

There is a grouping of similes here, there is "frozen movement" and there is poetic information not serving the linearity of the plot.

A sequence of hiatic effects can be found at pages 86 and 87 in the novel:

> The brim of his hat has soaked free of the crown in two places, drooping across his wooden face so that, head lowered, he looks through it like through the visor of a helmet, looking long across the valley to where the barn leans against the bluff, shaping the invisible horse. "See then?" I say.

The plain fact that the character does not see the desired object is expressed here with a complexity of images, all trying the reader's powers to draw connections between the invisible, the conceptual. The passage with the significance of a painting is purported to show not what the character sees but his power to see and also to make the reader see, as it were, through his closed eyelids, just his faculty of vision. The narrator's question ironically heightens the effect of the previous sentence.

High above the house, against the quick thick sky, they hang in narrowing circles.

Again, what is shown is not seen, at least not by the reader, as the object of reference is not named. In the following sentence, a look-alike is provided, while some strong characteristics are brought out relief-like:

> From here they are no more than specks, implacable, patient, portentous.

The same one page long passage by the character Darl contains twice the adjective "wooden-backed" and once "wooden-faced" as referring to the character he is observing. "Wooden" as a synonym to "rigid" corresponds to Henri Bergson's arguments about the comic rising from a sense of rigidity (Bergson 2003). The narrative here is held in suspense through underlying information. The hiatus is distinguished by a high degree of visuality and sonority, a flood of poetic information which causes a stop in the straight narrative.

At the following page, the character Cash's nine line long narration beings and ends almost identically:

> It won't balance. If you want it to tote and ride on a balance, we will have –"
>
> /---/
>
> It won't balance. If they want it to tote and ride on a balance, they will have –"

As in earlier examples, information is withheld, the reference to the coffin detectable only in the wider context. The repetition of the phrase resembles the use of a musical motif in slight alterations.

Examples of hiatus in *As I Lay Dying* are especially abundant in the sections of the clairvoyant half-madman Darl. Maszewski characterizes him: "Behind the artificiality of the stage one can feel the breath of the spontaneous, the mysterious. Darl, the master of metaphor and simile, seems to be mastered by them, loosens his grip of words and demonstrates, as though against his will, their fluid, uncontrollable nature" (Maszewski 2003: 141). Elsewhere in his study Maszewski says of Darl: "He is a dreamer and a devotee of the schemes that organize, systematize, harmonize" (ib. 138) and "he identifies with the family of sawdust, wooden-backed, wooden-faced shapes" (ib. 137).

At page 96 a passage of Darl's of relatively straight depiction is followed by a characteristic halt with both highly abstract and picturesque qualities, describing, as it were, the very nature of poetic hiatus:

> Vernon still stands there. He watches Jewel as he passes, the horse moving with a light, high-kneed gait, three hundred yards back. We go on, with a motion so soporific, so dreamlike as to be uninferant of progress, as though time and not space were decreasing between us and it.

A hiatus of the elevated "frozen movement" style occurs when at pages 135–136 nearly a page is devoted to the appearance of a log in the flooded river before it is to strike the wagon containing Addie's body and her family. In an italicized passage (italics stress the significance of the moment), the log "/surges/ up out of the water and /stands/ for an instant upright upon that surging and heaving desolation like Christ." In the next passage the "long gout of foam"

on the end of the log is compared to "the beard of an old man or a goat", giving the previous simile with Christ a vague ironic shade and making possible an association with ancient Dionysian rituals ("tragedy" meaning "goat-song" literally).

The "frozen movement" impact may appear in descriptions of an actual halt of objects or reflections:

> The air smells like sulphur. Upon the impalpable plane of it their shadows form as upon a wall, as though like sound they had not gone very far away in falling but had merely congealed for a moment, immediate and musing. (69)

or, more often, it is just an imaginary halt registered during rapid motion:

> He heaves, lifting one whole side so suddenly that we all spring into the lift to catch and balance it before he hurls it completely over. /---/ Then it breaks free, rising suddenly as though the emaciation of her body had added buoyancy to the planks or as though, seeing that the garment was about to be torn from her, she rushes suddenly after it in a passionate reversal that flouts its own desire and need. (88)

In the episode with the burning barn, Darl's schizophrenia reaches especially tragicomic dimensions, as the man who has set the barn afire rushes others, himself physically immobile, to save it:

> Against the dark doorway he seems to materialize out of darkness, lean as a racehorse in his underclothes in the beginning of the glare. He leaps to the ground with on his face an expression of furious unbelief. He has seen me without even turning his head or his eyes in which the glare swims like two small torches. (204)

As it can be expected from Faulkner with his classical models, a simile uniting "frozen movement" with allusions from antiquity will not be missed:

> When I reach the front, he is struggling with Gillespie; the one lean in underclothes, the other stark naked. They are like two figures in a Greek frieze, isolated out of all reality by the red glare. (207)

Unlike the clear-cut episodic character of *As I Lay Dying*, hiatic groupings of images in *Old Man* (1939) occur mostly inside extensive periods, accompanied by a complex flow of syntactic devices.

The concept of hiatus is not necessary for interpreting the tragicomic in all of Faulkner's works. In the three short stories analyzed below, the comic is created through such tall-tale-like devices as dialect speech, anecdotal characters and situations, by way of building up suspense through repetitions, and resolving it through anti-climaxes (which to remind is also an element of hiatus).

The Use of Climax and Anti-Climax in Three Tragicomic Short Stories

"Shingles for the Lord"

A story of a building burnt down like "Barn Burning" that precedes it in Faulkner's *Collected Stories*, "Shingles for the Lord" is written prevalently in the key of folk humour. Low-life comic dominates until the church unintentionally catches fire; after that, the description of the burning building with the preacher's baptizing gown in it likened to Archangel Michael, and of the serenity of the preacher at that sight rise into majestic heights in a solemn tragicomic pitch. The powerful anti-climax of the story lies in the reader's expectations for an amusing finale in the dog selling trick being dwarfed by a radically different kind of ending. It is a pure example of the comic lying in expectations falling blank as pointed out by Kant.

Before the climax in the flames, the reader is entertained by the dialect speech ("You don't seem to kept up with these modren ideas" (Faulkner 1985: 30), "druv the blade" (31), "the froe done already druv through the bolt" (33), "had went" (34)), the use of hyperbole ("I am jest a average hard-working farmer trying to do the best he can, instead of a durn froe-owning millionaire named Quick or Bookwright" (page 31 – actually a litotes within a hyperbole), "pap

making every lick of hisn like he was killing a moccasin" (31), "the whole shingle went whirling /---/ like a scythe blade" (32), "corn that's crying out loud for me" (35)) and the use of comic exaggeration as describing a hound "tiptoeing" a trail (32).

The story also contains a direct anecdotal joke:

> Mrs. Killegrew was worser deaf than even Killegrew. If you was to run in and tell her the house was afire, she would jest keep on rocking and say she thought so, too, unless she began to holler back to the cook to turn the dogs loose before you could even open your mouth. (28)

Likewise, there is a passage which can be interpreted as containing a hiatic image: "/---/ his eyebrows looking like a big iron-gray caterpillar lying along the edge of a cliff". (29)

"The Tall Men"

The humour of the story is overshadowed by rhetoric in favour of the independence of old style farming people. The investigator coming to arrest the McCallum youths who had failed to register for military service is a pathetic figure. Expectations during the first half of the story are too vague to be high, so there is no noticeable anti-climax, even though the attention paid to the burial of Buddy's severed leg, accompanied by the old deputy marshal's admonishing rhetoric, is unexpectedly great and slightly tragicomic.

The story is an illustration of the applicability of the character types as found in ancient Greek and Roman drama to Faulkner's works. The government investigator acting on behalf of the military is portrayed ironically just as military types were seldom spared a satirical treatment in ancient comedies. The family of the army evaders, the McCallums, who appear as the embodiment of peasant integrity, corresponds to the general sympathetic treatment of farmers in old Greek comedies.

The peasants and the deputy marshal speak a dialect ("This here ain't hurt none to speak of since I got a-holt of this johnny-jug" (51), "The Government done right by me in my day, and it will do right by you" (53), "Ain't you found out yet that me or you neither ain't going nowhere for a while?" (53), "/g/rowned men" (60)), to which

the grammatically impeccable sentences of the investigator form a comically sterile-sounding contrast.

"A Bear Hunt"

The story is in the vein of the low-life tall tale humour. The introductory part by an anonymous boy narrator with its adventurous but serious recollections possesses a Mark-Twain-like tonality. The main narrative, told by the sewing-machine agent Ratliff, is in heavy dialect, much more ungrammatical than Faulkner's average use of dialect speech. "A Bear Hunt" has two climaxes: one when the Black man Ash confesses to Ratliff how he had managed to get Luke Provine scared by the Indians, and the second a page lower when he reveals his reason for having urged the Indians to scare Luke. The second climax, frame-like, ties up the ending with the introductory part in which Luke's former misdoings were first mentioned. There is another, hidden framing device in that the scene of Luke attacking Ratliff in revenge for having sent him to the Indians is described twice, once at the beginning of Ratliff's narration and secondly before the first climax. The suspense – what will happen to Luke among the Indians and will he get rid of his hiccup? – is held high until the first climax arrives, by means of Ratliff's recurrent phrases such as "And still I never knowed, never suspected" (74) and "not suspecting anything" (75).

The story is rich in mispronounced and misspelt words such as "hit" (for "it", 66 etc.), "cusses" (for "curses", 67), "fahr" (for "fire", 67), "teching" (for "touching", 68), "squirls" (for "squirrels", 68), "mizzable" (for "miserable", 69), "sujest" (for "suggest", 71), "tahr" (for "tire", 71), "lantrun" (for "lantern", 72), "gwine" (for "going to", 73) and "harrycane" (for "hurrycane", 75).

Comic exaggerations by means of the hyperbole govern the imagery, giving this anecdotal tragicomedy a slightly rabelaisian sound: "flinging them fellows holding his arms around like they was rag dolls" (67), "I reckon he never so much went away as he kind of died away in the distance like that ere motorcycle Major mentioned" (69), "I done already drunk so much water that if I was to fall down I would gush like a artesian well" (69), "They said he would echo back from the canebrake across the river like one of these hyer loud-

speakers down in a well. They said that even the dogs on the trail quit baying, and so they all come up and made him come back to camp" (69 – 70), "his throat had done turned into a one-way street on him" (70), "Even his feet sounded mad" (71), "I'll skin him alive" (75), "Hit sounded like a drove of wild horses coming up that road" (75).

The whole description of Luke being tormented by hiccuping ("Hic-uh! Hic-ow! Hic-oh! Hic–oh, God!", 68 etc.) is, of course, wildly comical. There is sarcasm and biting irony in Ratliff's account about why the Indians should be grateful to the white man: "/---/ the white folks have been so good to them – not only letting them keep that ere hump of dirt that don't nobody want noways /---/. I hyear tell how pretty soon they are even going to start letting them come to town once a week" (72).

The strong dialectal forms of the white hunting company ("Hit was a good while after they had done hauled Luke Provine offen me that I found that out" (66–67), "Them Indians knows all sorts of dodges that white doctors ain't hyeard about yet" (71), "you ought not to done that" (73)) are modest when compared with the dialect talk of the Black character Ash, as seen in this confession of his in the second climax of the story:

> I ain't skeered for him to know. One time dey was a picnic. Hit was a long time back, nigh twenty years ago. He was a young man den, en in de middle of de picnic, him en he brother en nudder white man – I fergit he name – dey rid up wid dey pistols out en cotch us niggers one at a time en burned our collars off. Hit was him dat burnt mine. (79)

Conclusion

The emergence of the comic and the tragicomic from suspense in Faulkner's works may be achieved through verbal contrasts, through the juxtaposition of character types and by composition involving climaxes and anti-climaxes. The comic and tragicomic suspense may also be built up through collections of images that "freeze" action and cause an epistemological tension, a falling blank of expectations.

Related to the category of figures of speech and embodying the qualities of the comic as defined by Kant, such collections of images are called hiatuses in this study. In Faulkner's works, hiatus-like configurations corresponding to the definiton of hiatus given above, may also encompass whole episodes. However, the analysis of such cases lies beyond the aims of this article.

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La fuite de la ville: trajectoire littéraire de Michel Houellebecq

UR APALATEGI

La lecture de l'œuvre romanesque de Michel Houellebecq nous conduit à observer un éloignement progressif de la ville. Il s'agirait d'un signe creux si la ville n'avait joui d'une centralité indéniable dans les premières œuvres de l'auteur. Houellebecq, à un moment donné, qui pourtant ne correspond pas à un moment historique concret (comme le «retour à la nature» après mai 68, par exemple), mais plutôt à un moment individuel de sa trajectoire d'auteur, tourne le dos à la ville –comme entité symbolique– après que celle-ci a mobilisé tous ses efforts durant les étapes antérieures de son développement en tant qu'auteur. Avant d'interpréter cette fuite, il est nécessaire de définir avec clarté et précision les deux concepts centraux de notre analyse: la ville et la trajectoire.

Que représente la ville pour la littérature? Valéry, parle de Paris – ville littéraire par antonomase–, comme d' «une fonction nécessaire de la structure littéraire» (Valéry 1960: 1007). La ville, surtout lorsque l'auteur de la fiction choisit d'en situer l'action dans la capitale de son champ littéraire national, devient le symbole même dudit champ. Si l'on suit cette logique interprétative, la distance qui sépare le personnage de la ville, ou bien sa position dans la ville, deviennent à leur tour des métaphores de sa position dans le champ littéraire et de sa distance par rapport au centre de la vie littéraire nationale.

Quant au concept de trajectoire, nous l'emploierons selon la définition qu'en donne Pierre Bourdieu comme «la série de positions

successivement occupées par un même agent» (Bourdieu 1992: 359) dans l'espace social changeant dont fait partie le champ littéraire. Il s'agit, donc, d'une vision sociologique de concepts non sociologiques comme peuvent l'être celui de «carrière littéraire» ou encore celui de «biographie de l'auteur». Quelle position occupe l'auteur dans le champ littéraire au moment où commence, dans son œuvre, la fuite de la ville? Ou encore, étant entendu qu'à mesure que l'on parcourt l'espace social on subit un vieillissement social, qu'il est impossible de revenir en arrière: a quel moment *m* de sa trajectoire se trouve l'auteur lorsque se produit la susmentionnée fuite de la ville dans son œuvre?

Ainsi, ne s'agit-il finalement que de prolonger l'analyse proposée par Bourdieu du parcours parisien de Frédéric Moreau dans *L'Éducation sentimentale* de Flaubert. Parcourir la géographie de la ville, c'est parcourir la structure du champ littéraire. La seule variante que la présente étude ambitionne d'ajouter au modèle bourdieusien est que nous ne nous trouvons plus ici à l'époque moderne ou si l'on préfère au XIXe siècle, époque de l'État-nation dont le centre unique et indiscutable est la ville-capitale littéraire, mais dans une ère postmoderne ou globalisée dans laquelle un système littéraire polycentrique a pris le relais, modifiant sensiblement le statut de la ville capitale littéraire.

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La métaphore houellebecquienne de la position qu'il occupe dans l'espace littéraire est triple, elle n'est pas seulement spatiale. Tentons d'en trouver le code pour ensuite interpréter les déclinaisons qui en dérivent dans les œuvres successives de l'auteur. Premièrement, la métaphore a un volet social. Dans chacun de ses romans, l'auteur procure à son ou à ses personnages centraux un statut social qui semble présenter un rapport direct avec la position de Houellebecq dans le champ littéraire. Le deuxième volet de la métaphore positionnelle est sexuel ou amoureux. La femme représente clairement, dans ce système métaphorique, la relation plus ou moins frustrante que l'auteur entretient avec son lectorat. Le troisième et dernier volet de la métaphore est spatial. Où se situe le personnage

dans la ville qui est l'axe du récit –c'est-à-dire Paris–, dans quel quartier? Et, lorsqu'il fuit la ville, quelle destination se choisit-il? Quelle est l'utopie houellebecquienne? Est-ce encore une ville, ou est-ce autre chose?

Lorsqu'il publie *Extension du champ de la lutte* (1994), l'auteur n'est pas connu du grand public, ce qui suppose qu'il n'a pas encore son propre lectorat. Selon la logique métaphorique que nous venons d'exposer, en mettant en scène un antihéros dépressif et misanthrope qui théorise sa propre misère sexuelle Houellebecq nous parle de lui-même et de son absence de relation avec le lectorat. Le héros vit à Paris, travaille dans une société de services informatiques, gagne 2,5 fois le SMIC –ce qui n'est pas mal– mais cela fait des années qu'il n'a pas fréquenté une femme. Son supérieur hiérarchique le martyrise régulièrement en l'envoyant travailler hors de Paris. Le personnage confesse que «ces déplacements ont toujours représenté [...] un cauchemar» (Houellebecq 1997: 17) pour lui. Rien de plus normal dans un champ littéraire comme le français dans lequel la prépondérance de la capitale littéraire est aussi dévorante. Hors de Paris point de salut pour l'écrivain français. C'est pourquoi, bien qu'y souffrant de l'anonymat, le personnage houellebecquien préfère vivre à Paris plutôt qu'en province.

Après le succès important de ce court roman, Houellebecq commence à prendre de l'importance dans la vie littéraire française. Il n'est pas encore un auteur populaire, mais une certaine élite le considère déjà comme un «auteur culte». En 1998 il publie *Les particules élémentaires* que la critique y compris internationale va immédiatement considérer comme un des romans majeurs de la fin du XXeme siècle. Le succès public vient en outre s'ajouter au succès critique. Le poème placé en ouverture du livre est sans doute significatif du nouveau statut de l'auteur (obtenu grâce à son premier roman):

> Maintenant que nous sommes parvenus à destination / Et que nous avons laissé derrière nous l'univers de la séparation.(Houellebecq 1998: 13)

La séparation dont l'auteur nous parle peut sans difficulté être interprétée comme celle qui le coupait jusqu'alors du lectorat.

Houellebecq est désormais un auteur qui compte, il a son propre lectorat, il a laissé derrière lui l'univers de la séparation, les années d'inexistence et d'anonymat dans le champ littéraire.

Un autre changement est également survenu par rapport au premier roman. Le héros houellebecquien s'est dédoublé. L'alter ego de l'auteur est dorénavant multiple: il s'agit des demi-frères Bruno et Michel. Ce trait structurel des *Particules élémentaires* est un élément qui va se répéter dans les œuvres postérieures, ce qui lui confère un intérêt certain. En réalité, le dédoublement existait déjà dans *Extension du champ de la lutte*, mais sous une forme implicite qui maintenant, à la lumière du deuxième roman apparaît rétrospectivement avec davantage de clarté. Dans *l'opera prima* romanesque de l'auteur «notre héros» avait déjà son double. Il prenait la forme du collègue de travail Raphaël Tisserand, un autre authentique *looser*, prisonnier de la plus atroce des misères sexuelles. Posant les jalons d'un dispositif narratologique qu'il allait développer d'une façon plus consciente et systématique à partir des *Particules élémentaires*, l'un des deux alter ego théorise tandis que l'autre est immergé dans l'expérience existentielle et en souffre. Le premier personnage, le théoricien, représenterait ce que l'écrivain fait de son expérience personnelle représentée par le deuxième.

Dans les *Particules élémentaires*, le personnage qui vit l'amère expérience de la vie est Bruno et celui qui observe la vie à distance en théorisant est Michel. Paradoxalement, Bruno est un écrivain raté (qui exerce le métier d'enseignant de lettres dans un lycée) alors que Michel est un biologiste qui nous est présenté comme le principal inspirateur de la grande mutation métaphysique de l'humanité occidentale, après le christianisme et la révolution de la science moderne ! On peut dire, dans le cadre de notre logique interprétative, que Bruno représente le passé d'écrivain de Houellebecq tandis que Michel représente le futur qu'il se rêve. Le Houellebecq représenté par Bruno est celui qui tente de se hisser dans les positions élevées du champ littéraire avant la publication d'*Extension du champ de la lutte*. Il met du temps à «monter à Paris». Bruno passe son enfance dans l'Algérie française, il vit encore avec ses grands-parents à Marseille, puis, après son mariage avec Janine et l'obtention de son poste de professeur de lycée il vivra à Dijon, petite ville provinciale.

Il envoie ses manuscrits littéraires à Philippe Sollers, écrivain symbolisant le centre du système littéraire de l'époque, et bien que celui-ci ne trouve pas lesdits manuscrits (trop) mauvais il lui conseille de quitter la périphérique province s'il veut faire quelque chose dans le monde des lettres:

> Vous êtes en province? Mauvais ça. Il faut venir à Paris, tout de suite. Vous avez du talent (ib. 229).

Dans ce roman, la problématique sexuelle diffère quelque peu de celle développée dans le premier roman. Il est vrai qu'entre-temps Houellebecq a obtenu une certaine reconnaissance avec son premier roman. Bruno a bien des relations sexuelles, mais seulement avec sa femme –symboliquement associée à la vie provinciale–, et cela le déprime beaucoup.

> Ce n'était pas «la vie de Paris », ça je n'en avais rien à foutre, j'avais été constamment malheureux à Paris. Simplement j'avais envie de toutes les femmes, sauf de la mienne. (ib. 216–217).

Il est également vrai que durant les années qui précédèrent son premier succés littéraire Houellebecq, comme le dit son alter ego Bruno, fut malheureux à Paris, et c'est pour cela qu'il n'éprouve aucune sympathie à l'égard du centre du système littéraire français. Mais il n'y a pas d'autre moyen d'accès à l'existence littéraire, comme le lui a si bien expliqué Sollers. C'est pourquoi Bruno insiste et parvient à convaincre sa femme qu'il faut monter à Paris. Une fois à Paris, ils s'installent dans «un petit trois-pièces assez sombre» qui métaphorise spatialement la périphéricité de l'écrivain à l'époque.

Voyant que le simple fait de vivre à Paris n'est pas suffisant pour connaître davantage de femmes (lisez davantage de lecteurs), Bruno décide de rendre visite aux prostituées. Cela ne le satisfait pas davantage et il décide alors de tenter sa chance hors de Paris –la voilà la tentation utopique de Houellebecq–, dans un lieu au sud de Chôlet significativement nommé «Lieu du changement», créé en 1975 par de vieux libertaires pour «tirer un coup» (ib. 121), selon l'un de ses fondateurs.

«Tirer un coup» hors de Paris, toute une utopie en effet pour les écrivains en quête de femmes-lecteurs. C'est là-bas que Bruno fait la connaissance de Christiane, une quarantenaire avec laquelle il partagera une vie sexuelle «libre». Ensemble, ils iront dans un autre lieu utopique, le Cap d'Agde, station balnéaire et surtout célèbre lieu de rencontres purement sexuelles situé dans Sud de la France. Mais l'utopie n'est précisément que cela, une utopie, la réalité de la vie littéraire française se joue à Paris, raison pour laquelle: «Bruno et Christiane étaient [...] rentrés à Paris, le contraire n'aurait pas été concevable» (ib. 298). De retour à Paris, insatiable dans sa volonté de «baiser» avec le plus grand nombre possible de femmes –lisez, de nouveau, dans sa volonté d'étendre au maximum son lectorat–, Bruno fréquente, en compagnie de Christiane, des clubs échangistes, qui pourraient bien symboliser le lectorat limité de Houellebecq au cours de cette étape de sa trajectoire d'écrivain. Le club échangiste paraît une métaphore appropriée pour représenter la situation de ces écrivains qui jouissent d'une certaine estime dans des cercles relativement confidentiels et essentiellement composés d'autres écrivains se trouvant dans la même situation. Cette étape s'achève lorsque Christiane et Janine meurent successivement et Bruno retourne à l'hôpital psychiatrique où il avait semble-t-il déjà séjourné auparavant.

C'est alors que son demi-frère Michel prend le relais en tant que personnage principal. Le Houellebecq représenté par le scientifique Michel n'est plus aussi périphérique dans le système littéraire français puisqu'on nous dit qu'il a l'habitude de se promener sur le Champ de Mars et qu'il s'assoit pour lire sous les platanes de la rue Victor Cousin, près de la Sorbonne, lieu hautement symbolique du centre de la vie culturelle et intellectuelle française. Le Michel des *Particules élémentaires* correspondrait ainsi au Houellebecq postérieur au succès d'*Extension du champ de la lutte*.

L'ambition de Michel est claire. Il s'agit de fuir la France, et, partant, de fuir Paris. Parce que, comme nous le disent les premières pages du roman, Michel est conscient du fait que:

> Le pays qui lui avait donné naissance basculait lentement, mais inéluctablement, dans la zone économique des pays moyen-pauvres. (Ib. 9)

C'est une façon pour Houellebecq de dire que la littérature française est en train de se régionaliser à l'échelle du concert littéraire mondial. Fait par ailleurs indiscutable. Face à la prépondérance de l'anglais et face à la concurrence d'autres grandes langues littéraires, le français ne jouit plus du statut de langue universelle ou de langue humaine comme le proclamait Rivarol au XVIIIe siècle. Elle est en train de devenir, inexorablement, la langue de la France. Houellebecq, comme son alter ego visionnaire Michel, comprend que s'il veut progresser dans sa trajectoire il devra s'internationaliser. Telle est précisément l'ambition que l'auteur se donne avec *Les Particules élémentaires*. Son ambition n'est pas française, elle est dorénavant internationale, tout comme celle de Michel qui, avec ses recherches en biologie –la science est une bonne métaphore d'un langage universel, comme pourrait l'être la musique– tente rien moins que de modifier la condition humaine. Pour pouvoir mener à bien une telle entreprise il lui est indispensable de s'éloigner de Paris.

Il part vers l'Irlande, fuyant Paris, symbole d'un champ littéraire qui s'avère désormais trop étroit pour sa carrure. Au bout de dix ans, en 2009, juste avant de mourir, il envoie par courrier les résultats de ses recherches scientifiques révolutionnaires tant à l'Académie des sciences de Paris (lisez le champ littéraire français) qu'à la revue britannique *Nature* (lisez le champ littéraire international qu'il prétend conquérir avec ses particules élémentaires). Une fois décédé, un autre scientifique, Hubczejak, prend le relais en universalisant les découvertes de Michel. Hubczejak peut vraisemblablement représenter la version internationalisée de Houellebecq, c'est-à-dire un *born again writer*, qui, une fois parvenu sur la scène internationale et délesté du poids de son appartenance initiale au champ littéraire français peut recommencer une carrière littéraire.

Dans son *opus* suivant, *Plateforme*, publié en 2001, nous avons affaire à un Houellebecq devenu entre-temps un écrivain à renommée mondiale et qui a réussi grâce aux *Particules élémentaires* des chiffres de vente best-selleresques. En d'autres termes, il est devenu quasi instantanément un «grand auteur universel», un écrivain ayant accès au club littéraire le plus fermé de la planète où il

fréquente dorénavant ses pairs Kundera, García Marquez, Rushdie, Roth, Easton Ellis et une petite poignée d'écrivains supplémentaires.

Il est un syndrome qui affecte régulièrement les auteurs qui ont accès au marché littéraire international –aussi bien les membres du club des «grands auteurs universels» que les «grands vendeurs» du type Dan Brown, Michael Crichton ou Mary Higgins Clark, c'est-à-dire, pour résumer, ceux que l'on trouve dans les librairies des aéroports internationaux (véritables thermomètres de la vie littéraire mondialisée qui n'ont malheureusement pas été étudiées avec suffisamment d'attention et de respect). Ce syndrome veut que ces «auteurs d'aéroport» versent souvent dans l'écriture de romans au décor mondialisé. Généralement, ils tendent à écrire des œuvres dont l'action se déroule successivement ou simultanément dans plusieurs grandes villes à la fois, comme s'il s'agissait de faciliter l'identification à l'œuvre du lecteur international –curieux animal que jamais personne n'a rencontré. Il se peut, aussi, que la tendance voyageuse des romans de ces auteurs mondialement connus soit tout simplement le reflet ou le résultat de leur propre activité voyageuse, puisqu'il est notoire qu'ils sont régulièrement invités pour donner des conférences ou pour les besoins d'une tournée promotionnelle aux quatre coins de la planète. On pourrait encore interpréter cette internationalisation du décor romanesque comme une façon, pour ces auteurs, de marquer le territoire conquis, en clonant dans la topographie des romans qu'ils écrivent la topographie de la distribution de leurs livres. Quoi qu'il en soit, ce phénomène de dispersion géographique nous conduit à parler du caractère polycentrique du système littéraire mondial et il est vrai que ce fait relativement récent nous importe ici parce qu'il annule complètement, tant dans la fiction romanesque que dans la structure de la vie littéraire, la centralité antérieure de la ville capitale littéraire nationale. Nous sommes à coup sûr entrés dans une ère postmoderne dans laquelle la ville littéraire ne peut prendre la forme que d'un réseau de villes ou d'une ville globale. Le fait, dans un roman, de parler d'une seule ville, aussi grande et influente soit-elle dans le concert littéraire mondial, est presque automatiquement et spontanément interprété comme une manifestation de régionalisme littéraire.

Michel Houellebecq pressentait déjà la force de ce phénomène et il le démontre en organisant à la fin de son roman *Les Particules élémentaires* sa fuite de Paris, anciennement ville synonyme de l'universel. Avec *Plateforme*, Houellebecq se trouve face au défi de ratifier sa présence dans le club des grands auteurs internationaux et le «syndrome du roman d'aéroport» fait planer sa menace sur lui. Par chance, il surprend à nouveau avec une mise en espace on ne peut plus originale.

Le héros, qui de nouveau se nomme Michel (et dont le père, nous apprend-on, était provincial), vit au début du roman à Paris, près du Jardin des plantes, signe évident de l'ascension sociale du personnage houellebecquien et de l'ascension parallèle de l'auteur dans le champ littéraire. Michel travaille dans le milieu de l'art contemporain, mais sans passion, et passe ses journées à rêvasser sur des prospectus d'agences de voyage: ce qui sur le plan symbolique signifierait que quoiqu'il soit perçu comme un auteur représentant la postmodernité absolue et apprécié comme tel par les lecteurs les plus intelligents, il vise ailleurs.

Le héros houellebecquien de *Plateforme* –on ne peut plus parler comme antérieurement d'antihéros car Michel n'est à plaindre qu'au début du roman– rêve de partir et le nom du *tour operator* dont les prospectus le séduisent («Nouvelles frontières») n'est pas innocent. En effet, celui qui rêve de nouvelles frontières n'est autre que l'écrivain Michel Houellebecq qui tente de s'évader de la prison de la littérature franco-française. C'est pourquoi nous ne seront pas étonnés de voir que le héros déteste son père français et qu'il ne ressent absolument rien lorsque celui-ci meurt au début du roman. Ce qui meurt c'est en réalité le Houellebecq exclusivement français, et cela ne peut aucunement attrister l'auteur nouvellement consacré sur la scène littéraire internationale.

Un élément vient renforcer notre hypothèse interprétative. En effet, lorsque Michel monte dans l'avion qui le conduit à sa destination de vacances –la Thaïlande– qui représente son accès à l'au-delà de la frontière nationale, il se trouve immédiatement en présence de certains de ses concurrents de la scène littéraire internationale, c'est-à-dire les auteurs de romans d'aéroport: une fois parvenu à destination, dans l'hôtel, Michel se met à lire un de ces

romans, *La Firme* de John Grisham, comme s'il s'agissait de connaître à fond la concurrence pour pouvoir se battre avec efficacité. Les best-sellers des auteurs commerciaux –pas encore ceux de ses véritables rivaux, les grands auteurs internationaux– sont gratifiés de commentaires ironiques par Michel qui devient une fois de plus la voix de son auteur pour les ridiculiser.

> J'éjaculai avec un soupir de satisfaction entre deux pages. Ça allait coller; bon, ce n'était pas un livre à lire deux fois. (Ib. 96)

Après des mois d'abstinence sexuelle, l'arrivée en Thaïlande est comme l'entrée au paradis. À peine est-il arrivé que Michel s'offre en guise de cadeau de bienvenue les services d'une prostituée locale. Nous le suggérions déjà dans l'introduction, l'abstinence et la frustration conséquente symbolisent l'impossibilité d'accéder au lectorat alors que le sexe symbolise l'accès à celui-ci. Par ailleurs, il est intéressant de constater que l'auteur propulsé sur le marché international accède en réalité à un lectorat anonyme avec lequel il n'a pas, du moins au début, une relation d'intimité autre que celle qui se limite au sexe –autrement dit qui se limite au fait de voir son livre acheté. Ceci explique que Michel n'entre, dans un premier temps, en contact qu'avec des prostituées, chose qui du moins au cours d'une phase d'adaptation à son nouveau statut d'auteur international le satisfait pleinement.

À l'instar de ce qui se passe dans d'autres œuvres antérieures de l'auteur le personnage houellebecquien est ici double. En l'occurrence le double de Michel est Valérie, femme française qui travaille pour le voyagiste français Nouvelles frontières. Cette dernière semble symboliser le Houellebecq qui doit désormais faire face au défi de maintenir ou d'améliorer sa position au sein du champ littéraire international. Au début de leur relation amoureuse, en Thaïlande, Michel ignore le fait que Valérie n'est pas une simple touriste faisant partie du groupe. Lorsqu'il découvre qu'elle est en fait une conceptrice de voyages qui voyage parfois pour vérifier la satisfaction procurée aux voyageurs par les produits de l'agence, Michel se sent soulagé. Le soulagement vient de ce que Valérie, bien qu'étant française est quelqu'un qui est en contact avec le monde

entier; c'est quelqu'un qui ne risque pas de l'enfermer dans l'espace français. C'est, enfin, une experte en voyages –il faut lire experte en internationalisation des écrivains, évidemment.

Notons un détail important: le couple que ces deux alter ego de l'auteur forment achète un grand appartement situé dans la tour Opale qui offre une vue imprenable sur Paris: «Je n'avais jamais eu auparavant, de belle vue sur Paris» (ib.187). Il faut se rendre à l'évidence, Houellebecq est désormais un écrivain de taille internationale qui domine Paris et n'est plus soumis à son emprise comme lors d'étapes antérieures de sa trajectoire d'écrivain. Paris est devenue la *plateforme* de lancement de Houellebecq vers le domaine international. Dans ces conditions on peut comprendre que Paris redevienne sous la plume de Houellebecq un endroit positivement connoté, une belle et agréable ville.

Valérie est bientôt recrutée par une chaîne française d'hôtels internationaux –ces hôtels sont de nouvelles paratopies, qui ressemblent en tous points aux aéroports et sont le parfait équivalent topologique du best-seller international. Le groupe hôtelier Aurore qui recrute Valérie afin de reconquérir des parts de marché face aux concurrents britanniques et allemands représenterait quant à lui, toujours selon notre perspective de lecture, une grande maison d'édition française contrainte de relever le défi de reconquérir le marché littéraire international avec des auteurs français, chose qui n'arrive plus depuis de nombreuses années. Michel, peu à peu, va abandonner son travail dans le monde de l'art contemporain pour aider sa compagne Valérie à concevoir une formule hôtelière permettant de conquérir le monde. C'est une image assez juste du changement de cap de l'écrivain Houellebecq. Avec une grande honnêteté, et non sans un certain cynisme, Houellebecq, à travers l'aventure amoureuse de Michel avec Valérie, admet que dorénavant son objectif n'est plus de continuer à être un auteur adoré par un cercle restreint mais d'aller à la conquête définitive du marché littéraire international.

Valérie a besoin de trouver la formule touristique magique qui lui permettra de séduire la clientèle internationale. Michel souffle la solution à Valérie: «Propose un club où les gens puissent baiser» (ib. 250). Ce passage est hautement métalittéraire et autoréférentiel

puisque Houellebecq ne fait pas autre chose dans ce livre pour conquérir le lecteur. *Plateforme* est, en effet, un ouvrage cynique dans lequel le sexe est constamment et sciemment instrumentalisé pour séduire le lecteur international. Houellebecq a trouvé la formule magique et il la théorise au cœur même du roman dans lequel il la met en pratique. Cette inclusion de la théorie du livre dans le livre qui l'applique est ce qui permet à Houellebecq de transformer la médiocrité d'un simple roman vaguement pornographique en un roman important qui nous parle de la modification qu'est en train de subir le système littéraire mondial actuel et de l'art de produire un best-seller international.

Le succès de la formule touristique conçue par le couple Michel-Valérie est immédiat et fracassant. Avec l'argent amassé Valérie décide cesser définitivement de travailler pour aller vivre en Thaïlande. Michel souhaite l'accompagner. Il ne craint pas de regretter la France. Aucunement.

Désormais à même d'exhiber dans sa vitrine personnelle les conquêtes successives du champ littéraire français et du champ littéraire international, à quoi peut bien rêver un auteur comme Michel Houellebecq? Telle est la question à laquelle il répond dans *Possibilité d'une île*. La réponse apparaît déjà dans la quatrième de couverture sous la forme d'une simple question: «Qui, parmi vous, mérite la vie éternelle?». Il faut y lire, bien entendu, qui mérite l'éternité littéraire?

Ce qui veut dire que si jusqu'alors la problématique de l'auteur était essentiellement spatiale –il s'agissait de (bien) se situer dans les champs littéraires successifs dans lesquels il évoluait (le français et l'international)– dorénavant, étant donné qu'il est parvenu à conquérir tout l'espace auquel il pouvait prétendre, la problématique va devenir temporelle. Il s'agit de pérenniser les acquis en devenant un classique du futur.

Dans ce livre Houellebecq retrouve sa structure actantielle favorite, à savoir le dédoublement du personnage central. Cette fois-ci, conformément au caractère temporel développé dans le roman, il va s'agir d'un dédoublement diachronique. D'une part, nous avons affaire à Daniel 1, qui vécut dans le lointain XXIe siècle, et de l'autre, se trouvent Daniel 24 et Daniel 25 qui vivent dans le présent

de la narration principale, c'est-à-dire dans un futur très éloigné pour nous, lecteurs. Les Daniels du futur sont des clones génétiques du premier Daniel. Et, suivant la même répartition fonctionnelle que celle qui avait cours dans les romans précédents de l'auteur, le premier alter ego –Daniel 1– est celui qui vit l'expérience existentielle tandis que les autres alter ego l'observent et l'étudient à distance à travers le récit de vie rédigé par Daniel 1 avant de mourir.

Comme dans les romans précédents, le premier alter ego, celui qui vit l'expérience existentielle, Daniel 1, représenterait la trajectoire de l'auteur Houellebecq jusqu'à la rédaction du livre que nous lisons alors que les autres alter ego représenteraient «le mouvement» (au sens du mouvement dans une partie d'échecs) qu'il tente de réaliser avec ce même livre.

Daniel 1, bien que provenant de Paris où il a obtenu sa réussite sociale, vit près d'Almeria, dans une luxueuse résidence balnéaire. Sur un plan professionnel, il est artiste et réalise des *one man shows* dans lesquels il se présente comme «un observateur acéré de la réalité contemporaine» (Houellebecq 2005: 21).

Daniel nous raconte qu'à ses débuts il vivait dans un appartement moyen et banal du XIVe arrondissement de Paris, un quartier ni riche ni pauvre. Peu après il fait la connaissance de celle qui deviendra sa femme, Isabelle, du XVIe arrondissement, la zone la plus bourgeoise de la ville capitale littéraire. Sa relation avec Isabelle va symboliser, évidemment, sa fortune dans le champ littéraire national français. Mais lorsqu'il a amassé son premier million d'euros, nous dit-il, «je compris que je n'étais pas un personnage balzacien» (ib. 30). Ce qui revient à dire qu'il ne va pas se contenter de conquérir Paris et de vivre bourgeoisement dans la capitale. C'est pourquoi, progressivement, Daniel 1 va commencer à alterner ses spectacles difficilement exportables (en raison de la barrière linguistique), avec une carrière de cinéaste, bien plus en accord avec le statut international acquis par Houellebecq. Cela permet à l'auteur de métaphoriser le succès obtenu hors de la France. Par exemple, il nous raconte que l'un de ses films «légèrement boudé à Paris, avait été un triomphe à Madrid –ainsi d'ailleurs qu'à Londres, Rome ou Berlin; j'étais devenu une star en Europe». Et justement, au moment précis ou Daniel, alter ego de Houellebecq, arrive à devenir une star européenne, très

significativement, Isabelle, sa femme française, vieillit et grossit de vingt kilos, perdant subitement tout attrait sexuel. On ne pouvait trouver métaphore plus crue et brutale pour rendre compte du désintérêt de Houellebecq pour son champ littéraire national une fois qu'il est devenu un auteur de rang international. «Je ne veux pas être un poids pour toi», lui dit Isabelle, et elle lui souhaite tout le bonheur qu'il mérite. C'est le moment que Daniel choisit pour faire l'acquisition d'une résidence secondaire près d'Almeria.

De même que dans *Plateforme*, le personnage houellebecquien continue d'aller voir des prostituées –cette fois-ci dans les clubs qui bordent les route espagnoles– symbolisant par là la relation sans sentiments, purement commerciale, qui l'unit au très anonyme lectorat international.

Il continue d'accumuler les réussites commerciales, à tel point qu'il se retrouve bientôt à la tête d'une fortune de près de quarante millions d'euros. N'ayant plus de concurrent à sa taille il se met à vivre comme une authentique rock star. Daniel 1 achète une voiture de luxe pour exhiber sa réussite, une Bentley, nous précise-t-il, parce qu'il compte bien émuler Keith Richards (le guitariste des Rolling Stones). C'est que la célébrité littéraire, se rend compte Houellebecq, n'est pas la véritable gloire dans le monde d'aujourd'hui. Peut-être était-ce le cas au XIXe siècle, mais ça ne l'est plus. Pour comprendre l'état d'esprit du personnage houellebecquien au début de *Possibilité d'une île* il est nécessaire de se remémorer un passage prémonitoire des *Particules élémentaires* dans lequel Bruno, aspirant à la gloire littéraire, faisait le constat suivant:

> La célébrité culturelle n'était qu'un ersatz à la vraie gloire, la gloire médiatique; et celle-ci, liée à l'industrie du divertissement, drainait des masses d'argent plus considérables que toute autre activité humaine. Qu'était un banquier, un ministre, un chef d'entreprise par rapport à un acteur de cinéma ou à une *rock star?* Financièrement, sexuellement et à tous points de vue un zéro. (Houellebecq 1998: 239)

Lui a déjà obtenu la célébrité réelle, la médiatique, il fait du cinéma, il est un habitué des plateaux de télévision. Pour résumer, Daniel 1 –

tout comme son auteur Houellebecq– est avant tout (c'est-à-dire avant même d'être un artiste ou un écrivain) un *people;* il fait partie de la véritable aristocratie du monde postmoderne. C'est presque un devoir snobesque pour lui que de dénigrer des villes comme Paris et d'aller vivre dans un ghetto pour riches du sud de l'Espagne. Lorsqu'il accepte de retourner à Paris il ne le fait que pour gérer sa carrière d'artiste international, et il trouve à se loger dans le prestigieux cinq étoiles Lutetia. Sa vie est internationale, c'est la vie faite de déplacements incessants des célébrités mondiales; il vit dans un monde pour célébrités devenu paratopie globale. C'est pourquoi lorsque, las de la célébrité, il se demande s'il ne serait pas bon qu'il déménage de nouveau pour retrouver l'envie de vivre, il se fait la réflexion suivante: «Mais aller où? Et pour faire quoi?» (Ib. 137)

En effet, le héros houellebecquien est quelqu'un qui a épuisé les possibilités offertes par l'espace. Vivre à Paris lui semble sinistre. Paris est une ville de froid intense, il ne cesse de le répéter à longueur de roman, comme si la capitale française souffrait d'un hiver permanent. Paris est une ville régionalisée dans laquelle on meurt sans avoir connu l'amour (c'est-à-dire sans avoir connu le contact avec le public mondial):

> [...] je savais que la plupart des gens naissent, vieillissent et meurent sans avoir connu l'amour [...] «Né et élevé en France. Abattu en France. Une vie simple, en effet». (ib. 174)

Mais vivre dans la paratopie permanente de la célébrité internationale n'est pas davantage une solution, cela finit par lasser. Le seul domaine qui reste à explorer est le temps. Houellebecq et ses alter ego romanesques n'ont pas encore conquis le futur, à savoir l'éternité littéraire. Cela ne nous étonnera donc pas de voir que Daniel, désormais, lorsqu'il parle des écrivains, a cessé de parler des écrivains vivants. Il ne parle plus que des écrivains du passé.

Les rivaux directs de Houellebecq ne sont plus les auteurs de best-sellers internationaux, ni même les grands auteurs internationaux, mais les classiques, les grands auteurs morts, c'est-à-dire les *immortels*. Daniel 1 nous parle de Joyce, de Nabokov avec lesquels il entend rivaliser et qu'il critique donc sévèrement. La formule

littéraire grâce à laquelle Daniel 1 a conquis la France d'abord puis le monde entier est un cocktail de sexe, de haine et de provocations racistes (un de ses spectacles s'intitule «100% de haine»). Il se voit comme un successeur de Céline, c'est-à-dire, pour reprendre les termes qu'il emploie, comme un «anarchiste de droite». Ou bien il se compare aux moralistes français du XVIIe siècle, tels que La Rochefoucault et Chamfort.

On entrevoit la possibilité de l'immortalité –possibilité qui donne son nom à l'œuvre– lorsque Daniel 1, presque par hasard, participe à la réunion d'une secte sur l'île de Lanzarote. Cette secte prétend offrir à l'humanité la vie éternelle par le biais du clonage répété du sujet mort à partir de l'ADN conservé. Et pour assurer la permanence de l'identité de la personne clonée la secte prescrit la rédaction, par chaque nouveau clone lorsque celui-ci arrive au seuil de la mort, d'un récit de vie qui va s'ajouter aux récits de ses clones antérieurs. Ce qui veut dire que l'immortalité s'acquiert en écrivant. On parle bien de littérature.

Le problème de Daniel c'est que, bien que séduit par l'idée du clonage de son corps, il va connaître l'amour terrestre une dernière fois. Ce sera sa dernière tentation, pour employer une terminologie religieuse. Et il est vrai que le livre adopte délibérément un ton prophétique, voire une rhétorique biblique, à mesure que l'on s'approche du dénouement final, à mesure que le héros houellebecquien avance vers l'immortalité. Houellebecq ne se départit jamais de son sens de l'humour, et, partant, il convient de le lire toujours au «second degré». Il fait un clin d'œil au texte biblique, non seulement en choisissant le nom d'un prophète pour son protagoniste mais aussi dans le paratexte du roman, lorsqu'il fait apparaître en tête de chaque chapitre la mention Daniel 1, ou Daniel 24 (du nom de son clone du futur, narrateur principal du roman), accompagné du numéro du chapitre, rappelant la présentation formelle des textes du livre sacré.

Juste avant de se décider pour la mort immortalisante que lui propose la secte, Daniel 1 fait la connaissance d'Esther (encore un nom biblique), jeune et séduisante actrice débutante espagnole de 22 ans (lui en a 47). Posséder Esther est également une façon de conquérir le futur –parce qu'elle est jeune– et c'est ce qui aveugle

Daniel 1. Mais il se rend bientôt compte que malgré le fait que le plaisir sexuel que lui offre Esther est d'une intensité inconnue pour lui, celle-ci ne l'aime pas comme l'aimait Isabelle, son ancienne compagne française.

Esther accepte de coucher régulièrement avec lui, et même de passer quelques jours en sa compagnie dans sa paratopie pour célébrités au sud d'Almeria... mais seulement parce qu'il est drôle, et surtout célèbre. Dans la structure métaphorique de l'œuvre, Esther symboliserait une certaine partie du lectorat de Houellebecq, le lectorat international (celui qui achète les romans d'aéroport[1]), qui le trouve divertissant parce que la représentation de la violence ou du sexe dans les arts est «très cool». Or, cette représentation est ce que vend Daniel 1 dans ses spectacles ou dans ses films. La frustration de Daniel vient de ce qu'Esther ne comprendra jamais le contenu moral que dissimule ladite exhibition paroxystique de la violence ou du sexe dans l'œuvre de Daniel 1. Ce qui devrait être interprété de la façon suivante: la majorité des lecteurs de Houellebecq, ceux qui forment la masse des lecteurs internationaux qui l'ont rendu célèbre et riche, ne comprennent pas et ne comprendront jamais le vrai sens de son œuvre littéraire; ils ne la liront que comme un *excitant* de plus offert par l'industrie internationale du divertissement.

Arrivé à ce point, le roman devient, très logiquement, élégiaque. Le cynisme légendaire de Houellebecq cède le pas à l'autre grande tendance de l'auteur, la mélancolie romantique. Malgré tout Daniel 1 ne parvient pas à se détacher d'Esther jusqu'à ce qu'elle décide de partir aux Etats-Unis pour enfin lancer sa carrière d'actrice, laissant notre héros à l'abandon. Houellebecq est en train de nous confesser, à travers cette histoire d'amour très « morale », que bien qu'il jouisse à l'heure actuelle du statut de quasi rock star internationale, un jour un autre écrivain prendra sa place. Autrement dit, son Esther, ce fameux public international qui achète pour le moment ses livres par milliers d'exemplaires–, s'en ira un jour, et alors il ne restera plus que l'œuvre, dont le seul et véritable juge sera le temps.

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[1] Le fait que la langue de communication entre Esther et Dnaiel soit l'anglais démontre, si besoin en était, qu'Esther ne symbolise pas seulement le lectorat espagnol mais l'ensemble du lectorat international.

La seule façon pour Daniel 1 –ou pour Houellebecq– d'arriver à destination, de faire que son œuvre soit réellement connue, c'est-à-dire comprise, c'est de la transformer en œuvre classique qui résiste à l'usure du temps. Et cela, on n'y parvient qu'en renonçant à l'Espace pour conquérir le Temps. Telle est l'utopie –ou il serait peut-être préférable de parler d'uchronie– à laquelle aspire Houellebecq aujourd'hui. Il rêve de la possibilité d'une île, l'île des auteurs classiques et de leurs œuvres immortelles. Définitivement, la ville, aussi bien moderne –la capitale littéraire nationale du XIXe siècle– que postmoderne –le réseau de villes ou d'endroits paratopiques qui forment l'espace littéraire international contemporain– a cessé de l'intéresser. Il a fui la ville.

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To '*Dear Miss Mansfield*': 'from the Inside of the House'

RAMA KUNDU

> *I know that I am a Maori writer, and this is my world. And so ...[I] attempt to show the view from the other side of the perspective, from the other side of the doorway, from the inside of the house not from the outside.*
>
> **Witi Ihimaera**

Witi Ihimaera, considered a pioneer in Maori literature, and "the leading male Maori novelist"[1] of the day, rewrites some of Katherine Mansfield's well-known New Zealand stories, including 'The Garden Party', in his response collection of short stories on the occasion of the birth centenary of Mansfield, the 'canonized mother' of New Zealand literature. Ihimaera's collection, *Dear Miss Mansfield*, – which came out on the centennial of Mansfield's birth and offered some distinctly Maori variations of some of Mansfield's New Zealand stories – is but an ironical tribute to this charming 'precursor', which brings out the 'ephebe's 'anxiety of influence' *vis-a-vis* the illustrious icon, as Ihimaera rewrites story after story of

[1] To put it in Brian Boyd's phrase, cited by Meklin.

Mansfield with an overt challenge from the postcolonial 'ground beneath [his] feet'[2].

As Ihimarea writes in his prefatorial "A Letter" to his unique cenetennial 'tribute' to Mansfield:

> On the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of your birth, may I offer you this small *homage* as a personal tribute to your life and your art. Throughout the past year many, many people from all over the world have wished to say 'thank you' for illuminating our lives and our literature. Mine is but a single token of aroha and respect. Miss Mansfield, we in New Zealand have laid proud claim to you because you were born and brought up a New Zealander. Although you spent most of your adult years in England and the Continent, you always looked back to these southern antipodean islands as the main source for your stories…
> … I myself have always wished to write about your Maori friend Maata and why, if she had indeed possessed a novel you had written, she may have chosen to part with it. The novella 'Maata' is my attempt to provide a Maori response to this question. But the main part of this collection, Miss Mansfield, comprises an equally Maori response… to the stories….
> … They are stories in themselves… But they found their inner compulsion in my wish to respond to your work… (10–11)

'This Life is Weary', one of the best of these response stories, is a case in point; it is one of those stories in this collection in which the challenge and re-inscription is at its most explicit; here Ihimaera writes back to 'The Garden Party' – the most anthologized story of Mansfield and also the author's most popular New Zealand story which is generally considered another evidence of her love for the place and its people. Among similar story-doublets in the volume – re-writings flaunting very close connections with their originals – can be mentioned "His First Ball"/"Her First Ball", "The Boy with

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[2] Allusion is to the title of Salman Rushdie's novel, *The Ground beneath Her Feet* (1999).

the Camera"/"The Woman at the Store", "Summons to Alexandria"/"Bliss", "The Affectionate Kidnappers"/ "How Pearl Button Was Kidnapped", "The Washerwoman's Children"/ "The Doll's House".

It is interesting to note how Witi Ihimaera, in an aggressive gesture to create a Mansfield-like yet very much un-Mansfieldian text, establishes a special hermeneutic relationship with the source text, and thereafter achieves a synchronic transposition and transformation of the original. The intention is apparent in the teasingly ironical paratext of the title, *Dear Miss Mansfield.* Apparently there is a target for these stories – indeed not one, but two targets – firstly the author[outsider-colonial-white-female] born a century ago, who is invoked with mixed feelings and a slight tinge of irony; and secondly, the reader/s who must recall the original 'vision' to appreciate the aesthetic as well as cultural thrust of the 're-vision'. Unless Ihimaera's reader notes the points of his departure from the hypotext, the thrust of the story is lost. The effect of the story is calculatedly based on the reader's assumed knowledge of the source text, and his consequent ability in perceiving the subtle nuances of the palimpsest lurking behind the bold lines of the aggressive hypertext. In fact Ihimaera deliberately invites the reader to remember – and takes meticulous care to remind him of – the original story; otherwise how would he bring home the implications of his subtle touches towards erasure and re-inscription!

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Katherine Mansfield in her days showed the colonial settler's typical ambivalence of attitude regarding the 'colony', New Zealand in her case. On the one hand the teenaged girl found the Maori "deeply attractive", owing to "their distance from colonial bourgeois culture" (Stafford & Williams 2002: 31).[3] While in London in later years she even occasionally dressed in the Maori fashion. At the same time,

[3] In her early story "How Pearl Button was Kidnapped" (1912) the Maori figure as a romantic other – capable of stirring fear and desire – to the restricted lifestyle of the colonial settler/outsider.

like the typical settler, she also felt drawn toward England.[4] Still Mansfield, who left New Zealand for London as early as 1908, is recognized by biographers and literary historians primarily as an important figure in the New Zealand literature's early phase. Jock Phillips represents the general view when he writes:

> From the beginnings of European settlement through the first three decades of this century, New Zealand high culture was largely provincial, imitative and undistinguished. In terms of literary quality there was the lonely miracle of Katherine Mansfield whose genius was able to flower once she left her native land. Of native or distinctive traditions there was little trace. (Phillips 1983: 520)

Mansfield was indeed a lonely, lofty literary figure in the native land during her own time; and the land, though fascinating, was also alien in a way. She seems to typically epitomise the "intersection of colonial discourse and literary modernism" by which the "movement into exotic geographical space is understood as an inner exploration of the boundaries of consciousness" (Spurr 1993: 146). This is reflected in the exquisitely aesthetic response of her protagonists, – all colonial beings – to the place.

Stafford and Williams explain Mansfield's obsession with the Maoriland, – a "little land with no history" which she would flee, and yet which would continue to insinuate and percolate into her consciousness – in terms of her modernist aestheticism:

> Inescapably a part of her father's privileged colonial world, Mansfield felt an exaggerated need to establish her distance from her family and from the colonial society of her childhood. Where Maoriland writers tended to mediate the history of settlement by way of myth as a means of

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[4] As Mansfield wrote in 1907:

> "I know the bush is beautiful…
> But I, with all my longing heart,
> I care not what they say
> It's London ever calling me
> The live long day." [*Notebooks* I, 86]

> controlling its squalors, displacements and violences. Mansfield constructed an extravagant aestheticism by way of compensation for the frustrations and indignities of colonial life. … Mansfield's aestheticism is always one of self-conscious gesture. (2002: 44)

Mansfield's simultaneous preoccupation with New Zealand and modernist aestheticism leads W.H. New to characterize Mansfield as the 'problem' in New Zealand literary history: "her very existence cancels all easy generalizations about cultural and historical 'progress'"; because whereas Mansfield's name is associated with the development of European modernism in fiction "she is also claimed by a regional literature springing from New Zealand, where many, and all her major stories are set" (New 1987: 976). Her work has indeed generated a critical and geographical industry there.

After the death of Katherine's young brother in the First War the memory of her early years in New Zealand surged back as something very precious. Preoccupation with death and a serenity of mood have since been the hallmarks of her writing. The death of Laura's happiness, following the death of the carter in 'The Garden Party', is one of the many variations of the same theme in Mansfield's fiction. But 'in spite of all' serenity reigns supreme; as the face of the dead man seems to murmur to Laura, 'all is well'.

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Ihimaera, on the other hand, presents a polemical discourse as he engages with the same text. Though he too addresses the same themes of death and loss of happiness, he does this all from a new recontextualised perspective. Gayatri Spivak underscores the inherent appropriativeness of postcolonialism: "In postcoloniality, every metropolitan definition is dislodged. The general mode for the postcolonial is citation, re-inscription, re-routing the historical" (Spivak 1990: 41). In order to place Ihinmaera's story one must take into account, even if briefly, the genesis of a distinct New Zealand literature which began to emerge only slowly in the 1930s and '40s in the wake of a cultural nationalism; but this new consciousness too could not completely disengage itself from the colonial factor. "The

story of New Zealand writing from late nineteenth century to the present ", Stafford and Williams observe, "is that of a continuous dialectic between colonial, indigenous and modernizing forces, which has thrown up successive nationalisms, each enlisting elements of the world elsewhere and of the world to hand" (Stafford & Williams 2002: 34). In this context writing by Maori authors in the English language is considered no less authentic than traditional oral tales, songs or chants. As a character in Patricia Grace's *Cousins* puts it: "It's not sticking to the old ways that's important,... but it's us being us, using all the new knowledge our own way" (235; cited by Williams 2). For Ihimaera too the English language is not detrimental to the Maori character of a work "so long as the work speaks for Maori people and rests on a profound and sympathetic knowledge of the Maori sense of the world." (Ib.) And Ihimaera himself uses literature "to present a specifically Maori view of the world and of New Zealand history", thereby challenging "the established narratives of colonizers." (Williams 3). Roimata, a character in Patricia Grace's *Potiki* comes to voice a belief which seems to operate at the core of the Maori Renaissance – that by writing books people but defined themselves, and thereby asserted their own stories against those of their conquerors. Perhaps this backdrop of cultural nationalism accounts to some extent for the general literary hostility towards Mansfield, an iconised story-teller of the land who, in spite of all her love and sympathy for the land and its people, happened to have come from the conqueror's stock.

Mansfield, who had come to be perceived as a cultural icon in her own time, has, perhaps for the very same reason, apparently not always received a fair deal in recent times in course of the literary dialectic between colonial and indigenous forces. Vincent O'Sullivan points out how "no other New Zealand figure has troubled or challenged so many writers to irreverent, defiant or merely exploitative responses. Perhaps the most curious aspect is the underlying assumption that she ever has been an establishment icon." Sullivan also mentions the resistance in 1988 even to the idea of a Mansfield Centennial as discussed in a commentary in *Landfall* 171 (1989). In any case this very insistence in denying the iconicity of Mansfield by the New Zealand authors displays a degree of 'anxiety

of influence'. O'Sullivan writes: "New Zealand's attitude to its national icons being what it is, most literary energy has gone into challenging, subverting or displacing her status. Examples of canonizing, sanitizing or elevating her into a literary progenitor are hard to find. Her stories and life are often now used as the starting point of updated or 're-inscribed' variations" (O'Sullivan: 7). To cite just a few instances: Janet Frame's ironical allusions to Mansfield as 'Margaret Rose Hurndell our famous writer' in *Living in the Maniototo* (1979), Patricia Grace's hints in *The Dream Sleepers* (1980), at the cultural distance between a teacher's adulation for 'Kay Em' and a Maori schoolboy's real priorities, Ian Wedde's presentation of Mansfield in *Symmes Hole* (1986) as an anachronistic figure in Pacific culture, O'Sullivan's irreverent exploration of the Mansfield-Ida Baker relationship in *Jones and Jones* (1988), Bill Manhire's jocular title *The Brain of Katherine Mansfield* (1988) or Chris Orsman's projection of Mansfield in the poem 'Another Country' (*Ornamental Gorse* 1994) as a writer imaginative to the point of untruth.

In all these projections Mansfield seems to be at the butt of irreverence and mockery. Ihimaera's *Dear Miss Mansfield* (1989) could be comfortably placed as just another work in this line but for its intent seriousness. Ihimaera provides a 'Maori response' and a challenging interrogation, albeit without a trace of debunking,[5] while at the same time lapping and absorbing, automatically almost, the spell of Mansfield's aesthetic imagination and corresponding beautiful linguistic nuances.

On an interview with Juniper Ellis, in response to the question – 'Do you think that writing can help accomplish a decolonization?' – Ihimaera admits: 'Yes, of course I do. It's just that the question itself is a difficult one because, yes, writing does subvert that colonization process. However because it is a colonization process in itself, what one has to do is find the techniques by which to subvert it" (Interview 174).

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[5] In his interview with Paul Sharrad Ihimaera said, "we need more critics, and people who will write in an informed manner on our own writers – much in the same way that Katherine Mansfield was turned into an industry..."

In his *Dear Miss Mansfield* Ihimaera invokes the legacy of New Zealand literature while at the same time subverting and thereby reclaiming it for a new perception. A synchronic study of the two stories, *The Garden Party* and *This Life is Weary* would bring home the point; while at the same time this will bear out Julia Kristeva's claim about intertextual 'transposition' which involves the assumption that "the passage from one signifying system to another demands a new articulation of the thetic... – of the enunciative and denotative positioning".[6]

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In her story of a rich English family in New Zealand, throwing a garden party at their hilltop house, on the eve of which the report of an accidental death of a poor carter briefly upsets the youngest girl in the house, and she is sent to visit the bereaved family at the end of the 'successful' party, Mansfield makes a mildly ironical but aesthetically exquisite water colour picture.

Ihimaera, on the other hand, scoops up a scrap from this source text and starts working on it to create a poignant picture of beauty and pathos. In the source story – which is of a single day's duration – the Sheridans get ready in the morning with all the usual fanfare for their garden party to be held the same evening, when a report comes about " a horrible accident... a man killed". The baker's man who carries in cream puffs for the party also brings the news: a young chap living in one of those little cottages below, "name of Scott, a carter", was thrown off his horse and killed instantly, leaving "a wife and five little ones". Laura fails to make her mother see the point of cancelling the party on the death of such a 'neighbour'. Mansfield leaves enough ironical hints at the insensitivity of Laura's mother, sisters, and eventually of Laura too (a fine hat is enough to make her forget the death for the time being) to leave the reader in any doubt about her own attitude. (To be fair to Mansfield one must acknowledge her awareness and implicit critique of the class divisions embedded in the colonial system which is evident in her

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[6] Cited by Dentith, p.96.

stories like 'The Doll's House' or 'The Garden Party'.)[7] Still Ihimaera would not consider it enough. So, in order to give us a glimpse of the untold story he would stand back a little and start with the carter and his family.

Ihimaera starts his story by repeating one particular sentence which occurs around the middle of 'The Garden Party'. As Laura, on learning about the death of a carter, insists that the party be stopped, the other Sheridans feel, "That really was extravagant, for *the little cottages were in a lane to themselves at the very bottom of a steep rise* that led to the house." (Mansfield 1957: 248).[8] Ihimaera starts by looking from this 'bottom' and upwards towards the top, just as the Sheridans look down from the top towards this 'bottom'. This involves an inversion for the hypertext author, an act of 'writing back' which is to be presaged by an act of reverting the lenses. So the hypertext opens with: "*The little cottages were in a lane to themselves at the very bottom of a steep rise...*" (Ihimaera 1989: 115). This is followed by a quick, fleeting glimpse of *'The Big House'*, which is obviously, undeniably '*big*', '*lovely*' and '*gilded*' as it stands in glaring contrast to the '*little cottages*'. The insinuating effect of the allusion is unmistakable as the hypertext draws upon the source for underscoring the contrast between the two kinds of houses. "They were little mean dwellings painted a *chocolate brown*" (Mansfield 1957: 248); "*The very smoke coming out of their chimneys was poverty-stricken...* so unlike *the great silvery plumes that uncurled from the Sheridan's chimneys.* (Ib. 248–49). Of course Mansfield on her part clearly distances herself from this point of view of the Sheridan family by her ironical stance. Ihimaera but reinforces this irony as he mentions " this land of *chocolate brown* houses" and "*the very smoke coming out of their chimneys was*

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[7] As W. H. New claims, it is precisely "these mixed origins, the cultural diversity of her work, her own sense of more than one location, and the record of her life's voyage from the margin to the centre that characterize Mansfield as a writer central to postcolonial discourses; questions about identity, selfhood, gender, and class are instinctively raised and deconstructed in her fiction, particularly questions relating to the position of women in middle-class families" (New 1987: 976).

[8] Emphases within the excerpts from both the texts have been added by the present author.

poverty-stricken... not at all like *the great silvery plumes that uncurled from The Big House.*" (Ihimaera 1989: 115). The dearth, however, seems to have been more than made up in Celia's eyes, a poor girl of Laura's age, by the glamour of the personality of her dad, or 'Dadda'. The camera, while it takes in both the big and small houses, would move on to focus the carter, who gets not only a full name, but also a vibrant personality, a voice which is serene and musical, a humble past, a happy present blessed by a modest income, a loved and loving family and friendly neighbours; he is also seen speaking, singing, pleasantly interacting with his dear ones. Jack Scott, his wife and their children are allowed to become life-size, vivid people, whereas the people in the 'big house' appear shadowy, vague as should be natural when seen from distance. Thus the 'absent' elements in the source story emerge and come to occupy the foreground in the later story. Ihimaera does not offer a new story, but rather grafts onto the source story his imaginative additions regarding the 'absentees' there, and adopts the latter's perspective.

Regarding his own work Ihimaera would be rather against such 'labels' as postmodernism or postcolonialism which he dismisses as "international constructs, ... part of a need to look at a work from the outside." He would instead opt for a view 'from the inside out'; as he puts it, "What matters to me is the view from the inside out. I don't consider myself to be a postmodern writer, but I know that I am a Maori writer, and this is my world. And so ...[I] attempt to show the view from the other side of the perspective, from the other side of the doorway, from the inside of the house not from the outside" (Interview: Juniper Ellis 1998: 176).

This is precisely what Ihimaera appears to have done in his story 'This Life is Weary' which rewrites 'The Garden Party'. It *is* 'from the inside of the house', but not the house of the white family on the hill top where the party is held; it is the from the inside of the house of the cart-driver who dies on the day of the party. So, whereas Mansfield focuses a prosperous English family in a farflung island, Ihimaera's story captures the family of the dead carter, an absentee/invisible unit in the source tale, a tightly knit poor marginalized family –who hail from those 'bottom-drawer people'

(to use Ihimaera's cliché-phrase[9]). [They have their own distinctive mark though; they are sent off to school during the week as Mrs Scott "did not want them *swarming* in the little crowded lanes like many of the other *children* who were kept at home" (Ihimaera 1989: 117); to compare with "*children swarmed*" (Mansfield 1957: 249).] The binarial concepts of 'inside/outside', lying covert and implicit in the original/source story, get transposed in the different context of the later story. The hill-top house is now seen from the 'outside' by viewers who happen to be indwellers of the shabby shanties down the hills, representing the world of fringe inhabited by disadvantaged people. The point-of-view is theirs.

However, Ihimaera takes care to show poverty does not blunt their capacity for wonder as the reader is made to watch the Scott children enjoying their favourite week-end pastime; "crossing quickly over the *broad road between*" (Ihimaera 1989: 117) [cp. "*a broad road ran between*" (Mansfield 1957: 248)] the kids would go up to '*The Big House*' "to watch the house and the comings and goings of the lovely people who lived or visited there" (Ihimaera 1989: 117). If this is the stage they have no role to play on it; they are just self-invited watchers, indulging in an act of innocent voyeurism, deriving /squeezing all their pleasure from just *see*-ing. Ihimaera peers into the Sheridans' garden, and inserts something between its "*rose bushes*" (Mansfield 1957: 240; Ihimaera 1989: 117), "*karaka trees*" and "*tennis court*" (ib.), in order to accommodate the Scott kids somewhere on the outer fringe of the garden; it is "an old wrought-iron loveseat" which "had obviously been thrown out many years ago" , now covered with bird-droppings, but nevertheless a seat "perfect to observe from" (ib.). The kids are passive observers to the "gleaming" (ib.) stage, i.e., the house and its front gateway through which carriages drive in. On some rare occasion their dad can be glimpsed at the "back gateway" used by

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[9] In his story 'Passing Time' Ihimaera refers to this 'under'-world as a possible question mark on the conscience or percipience of those inhabiting the so-called normal world: "Those kids *were* disturbing, but perhaps people who lived prime-steak lives needed to be reminded of a reality outside what they were accustomed to: that there were after-hour people, fringe suburb people, bottom-drawer people who lived on the periphery of existence."[cited by Williams 10]

the delivery vans and suppliers' men. It is the "back way" (Mansfield 1957: 247) used by the cook, maid, Godber's man, *et al*, where Laura hears about the accident. Men like Jack Scott can at best have access to this "back gateway", but that is sufficient to fill his children with elation: "'Dadda, oh Dadda! We saw you at *The Big House* today!'– as if grace and divinity had been suddenly bestowed on him." (Ihimaera 1989: 117). Again, Celia, the eldest of the Scott children, keeps a notebook on the house; she is gently encouraged by her parents and the children would go up to the big house every Saturday morning with their sharpened pencils, notebooks, and simple lunch of bread and water. Mam and Dad welcome their reports of the happenings of the day, fondly "taking them as signs that their children would do better than they had to make good lives for themselves" (ib. 118). The stage/audience (albeit a hidden one) dichotomy, paralleling the top/bottom pattern serves as indicator to the dichotomized geographical-cultural space of the Ihimaera story. The author deliberately draws attention to this division, and the innocent voyeurism and pathetic mimicry generated among the silent, invisible 'audience' from the 'bottom' by this division; an audience from the bottom to whom access to the top will remain denied. "Although Celia had never been to any theatre, watching *The Big House* was just as she imagined a play would be" (ib.). They have no way to know what goes on inside. They may "wonder what her [Laura's] bedroom is like" (ib. 119) but have to remain satisfied with guessing; their stage constitutes only the outer realms of the house --"particularly the verandahs, top and bottom, and the French doors on to the verandahs. From out of these doors would come the lovely people of *The Big House*, the main actors of every Saturday afternoon performance" (ib. 118). And "on most occasions, the appearances by the Sheridans were seen from afar" (ib. 120). The little spectators can only hang around the fringe and get some fleeting glimpses of the 'theatre', which seems too unreal compared to their place. The actors on this stage, i.e., members of the Sheridan family, are recognizably like their originals with the same nomenclature, appearance and behavioural nuances. The Scott children, on the other hand, are Ihimaera's innovation, and it is through their eyes that we now see the Big House people; and it is

left to them, from their invisible 'seat' of spectators, to have picked up the names and other tit-bits about the Sheridans – their dress-up, eating habits, entertainment – by means of which they try to construct the 'play' on the 'stage' and also decide about their favourite character (like Ihimaera himself constructing his story from the small hints and tit-bits left by Mansfield's story).

Whereas Mansfield's story is about a single day, Ihimaera presents his story into two sections, the first section setting the stage through a period of repetitive weeks and months, and the second concentrating on the day of the party which also means, – for both the authors–the day of the death. Thus the second section of Ihimaera's story opens dramatically, on a note of heightened excitement much like the opening of the Mansfield story. One week-end the children return home with the big news of a garden party in the big house on the following Saturday. So to 'see' the party (not to join) they would go up for the whole day instead of just the afternoon. The adults too join the fond game of 'partying' by proxy. The mother manages to sew up some new dresses for the kids from her treasured pieces of velvet, an old curtain, a lace ribbon and other materials. To her daughter's protestation, "But Mam, we're not invited--", she replies: "Hush, child. We can dream, can't we?" (ib. 121). Dadda also endorses Mam's wish, both verbally and otherwise. Thus by now the entire family has come to join the game of dream-making. To the children's thrilled surprise Dadda has transformed his cart overnight into a carriage with cushions, and jovially hands up the children one by one with the perfect manners 'befitting' the occasion, while Mam gives them a hamper of sandwich and cake, special food for the special day.

As the children set off for the hill top the reader is brought back again to the opening sentence of the source. "*And after all the weather was ideal*" (ib.). The gardener too is there; only a small information is added that he is a Maori. "The *gardener* had been up *since dawn, mowing the lawns and sweeping them*" (Mansfield 1957: 240); compare this with: "They saw the Maori *gardener* already at work *mowing the lawns and sweeping them* "(Ihimaera 1989: 121). (One can guess the immediate effect by remembering how the epithet is loaded for Ihimaera and his ethnic readers.) From their "position"

(ib.) under the trees the children can see the party from beginning to end, the description of the party closely following the original even in small details, – from the setting up of the marquee to the arrival of the pots of "*canna lilies... radiant... frighteningly alive on ...bright crimson stems*" (Mansfield 1957: 244; Ihimaera 1989: 122), even Laura coming out with bread-and-butter in hand, to Jose rehearsing on the piano, "This Life is *Wee*-ary", and Godber's man talking to cook, a sudden silence falling on the house, Laura speaking something in an alarmed voice. But that is soon over. The children are "enchanted" by the lovely people, lovely food, lovely band. While the party is bathed in sunlight , "*there in the shadow* " (ib. 123) the children, in an innocent and pathetic mimicry, imitate the guests and dance to the band, while "always, *far away in the sunlight* was dear, darling Laura" (ib.). Finally as the party comes to a close Ihimaera finds no better or more appropriate expression than Mansfield's to describe the closure: "*And the perfect afternoon slowly ripened, slowly faded, slowly its petals closed.*" (Mansfield 1957: 252; Ihimaera 1989: 123). These are the turns, – such wonderful sentences as those on the 'frighteningly alive' canna lilies or the 'fading' afternoon, which Ihimaera takes verbatim from the source,[10] that betray his admiration for the charm of the precursor in spite of all his aggressive challenge against the [literary] 'mother'. To put it in Michela Mudure's words, "the model invades and fascinates to the point of obliging the emulator to some submission" (Mudure 2003: 189).

Now that the party is over the children reminisce the 'lovely' day while waiting for Dadda. After waiting long they start homewards *down* the 'sordid lanes' and on the way they pass by a youth asking a girl, "*Was it awful*"? (Mansfield 1957: 256; Ihimaera 1989: 124); once again the two texts overlap and embrace one another.

On reaching home they find, just as Laura saw in the other story, "a dark knot of people stood outside" (Mansfield 1957: 254; Ihimaera 1989: 124); but whereas Laura merely saw "beside the gate an old, old woman… sat on a chair, watching"(ib.), Celia "saw Gran, Mam's mother, sitting in a chair, beside the gate"(ib.). While looking

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[10] Borges writes about one Pierre Menard who had not altered a single word of Cervantes, and yet written his own *Don Quixote*!

for Mrs Scott Laura saw a woman, "her face, puffed up, red, with swollen eyes and swollen lips, looked terrible"(ib.). Celia meets the same person, yet with what a difference of feeling! Celia desperately looks for Mam:

> 'Mam? Dadda?' Celia called. 'Mam?' Then another woman was there.Her face was all puffed up and red, with swollen eyes and swollen lips. 'Mam?' Celia whispered, because it was indeed her mother. But she looked so-so-*awful*. (Ib.)

This is the difference between looking from outside and feeling from inside. Ihimara elaborately uses the exact words and phrases, sometime full sentences, patches of the Mansfield text precisely in order to highlight this gulf of difference between the insider and the outsider. The outsiders to the 'big house' stage are insiders in this cottage tragedy, and almost the same expressions are used to connote contrastive positions determining contrastive responses.

Again, in both the stories the child is the focus, but without the mutuality of figural relationship. The narrative focus in both is the innocent eye of a child, a technique which is commonly employed by Mansfield in her New Zealand stories. The narrative perspective in Mansfield's story is usually established through a naïve girl child encountering the place and people with innocence and optimism.[11] The girl child in Ihimaera's text also goes through a kind of initiation, but in her case it is an initiation attained through terrible grief; because what Laura sees as an outsider is a personal and terrible sorrow for Celia who happens to be 'on this side of the doorway'.

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[11] New writes: "Her [Mansfield's] New Zealand stories mostly focus on multi-layered families representing several points of view but concentrating on that of a child. The childhood perspective in Mansfield's fiction has been influential on twentieth century New Zealand writing; this perspective is also a widespread characteristic of colonial literatures. In Mansfield's case the focus... establishes an optimism and an innocence associated with New Zealand as a landscape of possibility, of spaciousness, and of growth, even though it is offset by the more difficult and more limited point of view of the adult characters" (New 1987: 976).

Finally, the title of the story suggests a paratext with an ore of meaning hidden in its grains. It refers to the song Jose, the unmusical Sheridan girl, practices on the piano, in the morning of the party while her face breaks into "a brilliant, dreadfully unsympathetic smile" (Mansfield 1957: 245). In Ihimaera's story the Scott children would rather have Jose give up the song, not only because of her lack of musical sense, but also, more importantly, because "nobody could sing 'This Life is Weary' better than Dadda" (Ihimaera 1989: 119). It also suggests an answer, albeit a grim one, to the tentative question of Laura at the end of 'The Garden Party' which remains unanswered there. 'Isn't life', she stammered, 'isn't life –'. But what life was she couldn't explain. (Mansfield 1957: 256).

Laurie's answer, – "Isn't it, darling" – remains evasive. Ihimaera tries to formulate an answer through the title: yes, life *is* weary, this life of fragile dreams and rude deprivations, of tears and sighs, of too many responsibilities, of the compulsion to 'know' and 'see' premature death is wearying. Thus the stories seem to complement one another; and while the latter draws on ideas and expressions of the former, the mould remains the same. It is within the same frame that the second story is layered upon the first.

Ihimaera seems to have been engaged in an interesting game here; again and again he would bring his story increasingly close to the original, almost twist round it like a creeper, and then would shoot out a stray branch in an unexpected direction by adding the small but poignant touches, touches pregnant with meaning, yet perfectly in tune with the original. Studying this process of continuous conglomeration and rupture, fusion and fission, coalescence and departure by which the two stories continuously converge with and get layered upon one another is interesting and rewarding. After reading Ihimaera one has a feeling that the original itself contained the seed of the later story which Ihimaera brought out from its hibernation and nurtured to blossoming! It may be interesting to note in this context that "KM noted at the end of the manuscript, 'This is a moderately successful story, and that's all. It's somehow, in the episode in the lane, scamped'" (cited Sullivan & Scott 1996: 298, n.1]

In this superb negotiation of texts fine details of the source story have been continuously interwoven into the interstices of the later text and the reader gets the added pleasure of recognition, recognition of linguistic echoes which, while serving to highlight the contextual/perceptual ruptures, also disclose a certain degree of admiration – albeit unselfconscious – felt by the rebellious 'ephebe' for his undeniably fascinating 'precursor'.

To cite just a few examples:

> "The house was surrounded with broad swathes of bright green lawn bordered by daisy plants. Just beyond the borders were roses – hundreds and hundreds of glorious dark red roses of the kind that the children had seen on chocolate boxes" (Ihimaera 1989: 117); just to read this side by side with the other description: "... the grass and the dark flat rosettes where the daisy plants had been seemed to shine. As for the roses...hundreds, yes, literally hundreds, had come out in a single night... as though they had been visited by archangels." (Mansfield 1957: 240). What Mansfield describes as the particular morning on the day of the party is used by Ihimaera as a constant. The opening sentences of Mansfield are as follows: "And after all the weather was ideal. They could not have a more perfect garden party if they had ordered it. Windless, warm, the sky without a cloud. Only the blue as veiled with a haze of light gold..." (ib.). Compare this with Ihimaera's description of the Scott children's enraptured viewing of the house as if it were a theatre, and , he adds: "Like all theatrical settings, the weather was always ideal up there and the days perfect and made to order. The backdrop was windless and warm, with a light blue sky flecked with gold" (Ihimaera 1989: 118). Thus by lending permanency to the elements of a single morning Ihimaera highlights the feeling of illusoriness which the poor children get at watching the house, and thus justifies their feeling: "It was so unlike the dark and dirty *eyesore* which cluttered the area the children came from. Indeed, sometimes it was difficult for the children to accept that this world was as *real* as their own" (ib.). This can be considered counterpoint to Laura's brief thought of the

dead body being carried into the house of the bereaved which is pushed back by the euphoria of the party, so that "it all seemed blurred, *unreal*, like a picture in the newspaper" (Mansfield 1957: 251). This again echoes back to the unsympathetic perception of the Sheridans [which has been, to be fair, presented with critical irony by Mansfield]: "...the little cottages... were the greatest possible *eyesore* and they had no right to be in that neighbourhood at all" (ib. 248). It is a long list of allusions – or better to say reverberations – which are intended to be immediately identifiable; and apparently it is no 'accidental confluence',[12] but very self-conscious convergences, deliberately planned coherences which any perceptive reader would recognize and respond to. Ihimaera's consistent manner of allusive manipulation of the source text seems to bear out "the intertextualist's preference for the communal construction of meaning" (Hinds 1998: 50).The author, instead of abandoning the old story just gives it a slight twist and it is deconstructed to be recontextualised in the 'other' space of the same story, the peripheral space down the 'bottom', of which Mansfield herself has left enough clues in her text. The hypertext consistently exhibits an "effort to connect" (ib. 21) with the source. In order to appreciate the thrust of the elaborate acts of allusive gesturing we have to read both the 'incorporated' and the 'incorporating' texts systematically side by side and notice the finer points of intersection and variation in this close intertextual relationship, which, to use Mudure's beautiful metaphor, "alternate like variations upon a common theme in a musical texture, or like the waves of the sea for ever bathing the shores of the two writers' beloved island..." (Mudure 2003: 188).

[12] A term used by Hinds to distinguish between 'reference' and auto-intertextuality (Hinds 20).

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Grotesque Alienation of Characters in Anton Pashku's Stories

MARISA KËRBIZI

Anton Pashku (1937–1995) is one of the most modern Albanian writers. His way of writing is distinctive and original. He differs considerably from the greater part of Albanian literati, who in the near past followed the absurd rules of socialist realism.

Pashku glorifies his personal hero, quite uncommon in Albanian Literature, an existential modern hero, masterfully depicted as dismantled and ugly, in his ordinary daily life. In most of his stories, Pashku brings forth characters, whose soul is devastated and irreversibly disabled by all kinds of pressures thrust upon him. They appear as a deformation of human form, embodied in a shrunken human soul, battered by the powerful influence of all kinds of ideologies and demagogies constantly attacking the human race. Pashku's characters are purely grotesque and transfigured because they represent the alienation of contemporary human beings.

The characters are not described at all, all that the reader knows about them is their name (if they have one) and some very uncommon situations where they are involved in. Even the way of naming them is bizarre and grotesque. Relying on this essential element, Pashku aspires to delineate a strange, unusual personage.

But why a strange naming of the characters can lead us to such an uncommon perception of them? Why is their name so important in profiling their personality?

Due to our name we endeavor to obliterate resumptive data which makes us classified simply as human beings, terrestrial, mortal, etc.

Consciously or not we attempt to be unique in every single component of our existence. One of these elements is the name too. It does not only subvert the first identification of human beings, but it signals a great deal of one's family background.

Even though Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet* asserts that the name is just a convention and nothing more, it would really be a pure naivety to think that characters' names in modern literature are merely casual. Predominantly in contemporary literature their names refer closely to their personality, the writer's outlook about art and literature and the notions he wants to convey to the readers.

Thus in Eugène Ionesco's play *The Bald Singer* all the characters are called in the same way; Bobby Watson and the reader can never figure out who is who. We hear them speaking but we cannot really figure out who is speaking and less so, what is being said. By such means the author accentuates the drama of human communication. We talk and talk with each other, but we are never understood. In García Márquez's novel *A Hundred Years of Solitude*, characters' names are reiterated from one generation to another, infusing in the reader the iterative idea of solitude's vicious circle.

Similarly, Pashku presents substantial features of his characters by their function. Quite a number of them are defined by their vesture which was accidentally put on. The lack of inner world and the destitution of personality make his characters completely identical to each other. The author makes the reader distinguish his characters by judging from the clothes they wear. And given the fact that they never change their vesture in the whole story, it becomes the only means of their identification. It is written in the Scriptures that the soul is more important than the body, and the body is more important than the wear. But Pashku's characters defy it.

Quite differently from classical fiction, Pashku's characters are not revealed through complex psychological processes. The author does not introduce his character through an ordinary route of revealing his/her soul, conscience and sub-conscience. Most of his characters are complete void, deprived of feelings and experiences. They cannot evoke anything.

Usually in his works Pashku defines his characters by the clothes they wear. His main intention is to emphasize that such a character is

by no means more important than its clothing. As a result, the author drives home the description of a human as a complete loss, disfigured, devalued and grotesque.

We may find this kind of characters' definition in the story "Këmaqësitë e Megalopolisit" (Megalopolis Satisfactions). The characters are described in the same uniformed way, by means of their vesture. Moreover, the characters wear almost the same clothes. They are depicted like being dummies roaming around with no distinctive trait. They seem like xerox copies of each other.

> He then saw those two dashing into each other – the one with **completely yellow trunks** darted to the belly of that other one with **yellow and black stripe trunks.** (Pashku 1986: 221)[1]

They are defined only through their clothing, a skin-deep element. The only characteristic that distinguishes them while fighting in the arena of Megalopolis, is a black stripe round the arm of one of them, as a pure intimation of death at the end of the fight. Even the actions by which they are defined look strange. The fight between two men makes them analogous to wild animals, or worse. Human reason has totally vanished and only beastly instincts determine these modern characters.

The same situation was prodigiously depicted by Kafka in his *A Report to an Academy*, where the main image reveals that the development of civilization has turned human beings into slaves. Living like that, completely subdued by the society's rules, they forcibly exhibit their animal instincts.

We can find the same situation, where the characters are individualized by means of their outfit, in another story by Pashku, "Kush tha se ky tregim është fantastik" (Who said this is a fantastic story?):

> – What's going on there? – asked unexpectedly he with **black gloves.**
> – Something! – replied that one with **grayish gloves.**
> – What? – sadly repeated the **black gloves** guy. (Ib.232)

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[1] The translations and the bold in quotations here and in the following are mine – M. K.

This is the most distinguishable means by which Pashku's characters are introduced and labeled: the color of the gloves they wear. Gloves is what has remained of their existence. Being void as they are, whatever superficial exterior element, like clothing and gloves, makes them distinctive.

Their dehumanization is easily understood from their dialogue, too. Their brief conversations reveal their incapacity for any dialogue. Pashku makes his characters lose one of the most important human characteristic, the speech. In order to embody his ideas, secondary characters play an important role in his writing. Such characters do not have a voice, they come into existence through the perception of words and thoughts of the main characters. Sometimes, the connection between both categories of characters may appear by chance, in situation that can be labeled as a pure grotesque.

This type of a character we meet in "Këndaqësitë e Megalopolisit":

> (...) after extinguishing his cigar, they rose, went out unto the road crossing the street towards the opposite sidewalk, just where the **woman dressed in black was strolling ahead with her white dog.** (Ib.219)

Pashku's favorite color is black. A considerable number of his characters labeled by their clothes are usually dressed in black. Let us mention the significant fact that the black color is mainly the symbol of mourning in many human communities.

Such a choice of color is far from being accidental. The author seems to emphasize that all these characters and all the encompassing elements of their existence host a certain pain for the loss of their identity. Such characters, being labeled by the color of their clothes, are considered to be a "dead and gone" category. In most cases, they do not have a voice at all, let alone thoughts, ideas and feelings. Their deformation is total and complete.

The same can be said of Pashku's story "Në shiqimin e saj të fundit" (In her last look), where the character is definitely not depicted physically but only by means of her clothing, military uniform. This detail is an ugly grotesque, to witness a deep alienation and a total loss of human personality in people turned into a "war machine";

> **The black doll** was unstoppable. **Even the man holding a bayonet in his hands, dressed in green military uniform, swastika and with an iron metal in his belt** (...), couldn't halt his laughing. (Ib. 290)

Thus once again the clothing is used as an important element of the grotesque. The author seeks to depict his character simply as a Nazi beast, unable to step out of obligation, bestowed upon him by the uniform he was wearing. Smiling and laughing, the very distinctive human features, become now the attributes of a beast.

Another intriguing moment is given in "Anija e dehun" (The Drunk Ship). Nearly all the characters at the masked ball are thoroughly featured by the masque they wear. It serves as the only means of being different from each other. Again, it is Pashku's specially grotesque way to depict a modern hero.

> The orchestra blasted into rhythm music, while he, through the bottles glass, was looking at the dancers. When he saw the **woman with the masque of sun,** he turned his head. She was tall and was wearing a long **black dress**. (Ib. 193)

There is an immense discrepancy between the masque covering her face and the clothes she was wearing. This inconsistency brings forth the interiorly entwining contrast of the Sun, the symbol of life, and the black dress. Life and death in Pashku's stories stand always close to each other and sometimes they are incomprehensibly intermingled. The presence of the tragic dimension deepens further in the following fragment where in the war between life and death the latter prevails. Death is superior.

Suddenly he saw the woman with **the masque of the dead** (...). At a glimpse he saw her totally: **dressed in a heel-long white dress. She looked just like a phantom**. No one else had such a masque, far from ordinary, at the ball. She is the most beautiful masque of the evening. She is the absolute winner. (Ib. 194)

By using these elements, the author not only tries to introduce his disfigured characters but also death, roaming among the guests. By means of the tragically shaded grotesque, he seeks to describe

thoroughly the alienation of all characters. They all are part of a grotesque mosaic which presents images of unfulfilled figures, to symbolize the impossibility of a normal life. They all are almost dead, so death is their honored guest at each celebration.

The grotesque deepens more, as death is embodied by a woman character. It seems to emphasize that death begets death and, thus, is sadly cyclic, eternally.

In conclusion, in most of his works Pashku excels in portraying weird and ugly characters. Their function, behavior, depiction and situations are completely grotesque. Such characters represent an incomplete being, lost and battered. There is no insurmountable boundary between life and death in Pashku's characters. Death overshadows their existence long before their life comes to an end. It turns their souls and minds into numb and empty entities. Some of Pashku's characters fight to overcome this vicious circle. Most of them, however, resign to their fate.

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There and Back Again: The Structure of *The Lord of the Rings* as Monomyth

BĀRBALA STRODA

The present article is aimed at investigating basic structural principles of the literary fantasy genre in connection with the archetypal structures, in particular the quest or the hero's journey, thus establishing the connections between the genre and the concept of the traditional hero myth. The paper gives an insight into the concept of hero myth or monomyth as defined by Joseph Campbell and traces its elements in the famous saga *The Lord of the Rings* by the so-called father of modern fantasy John Ronald Reuel Tolkien.

Joseph Campbell, a prolific American scientist of comparative mythology was one of the first to draw parallels between certain structures in myths, fairytales and other types of the story. The basic formula of these structures has been outlined in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* where he proposed the so-called theory of the monomyth (Campbell 1973: 337), a synthesis of recurrent motifs in heroic quests of varying mythological traditions. Campbell insists that most traditional stories contain the same underlying pattern of the hero's quest or journey that he outlines as follows: "A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man" (ib. 30). This process, as Campbell suggests, can also be viewed as a magnified rite of passage, a journey of enlightenment, during which the individual breaks through the boundaries of self to discover his unique contribution to the world. This opinion has also been echoed by the famous Rumanian researcher Mircea Eliade who divides this

paradigm into the familiar three-fold structure of departure, initiation and return and connects it to a broad variety of symbolic actions and objects.

The archetypal structure of the mythological hero's adventure is the path also most fantasy writers seem to take, starting from the initiators such as J. R. R. Tolkien. It can even be stated that the whole genre of literary fantasy relies heavily on these archetypal foundations. As put by the fantasy writer and theoretician Ursula le Guin: "Fantasy is not antirational, but para-rational; not realistic but surrealistic. In Freud's terminology, it employs primary not secondary process thinking. It employs archetypes which, as Jung warned us, are dangerous things. (..) A fantasy is a journey into the subconscious mind, just as psychoanalysis is." (Le Guin 1979: 84) As Le Guin reminds, fantasy writers are not the only ones to note the power of magical stories. Jungian psychologists regard the fairy tale quest as reader's symbolic inward journey into one's soul evoked by the reading experience.

In this paper we will investigate in particular *The Lord of the Rings*, the book traditionally considered to mark the birth of the modern fantasy genre. Although Tolkien was not the first to compose a piece of fiction featuring an imaginary world full of fantastic beings and heroic adventures, but he was definitely one of the first to turn the literary form concerned with the strange and the magical into a vehicle for exploring a person's spiritual world and restoring many forgotten mythical concepts to life. In the following paragraphs we will discuss the structure of the monomyth as corresponding to the plot of the novel.

The monomyth or the cycle of the hero's initiation consists of certain formulaic parts. The initial premise reveals "a stage when order has been disturbed and the equilibrium of earlier times must be re-established (...) a challenge must typically be overcome, or some dire threat looms over the land. The structure dictates that elements of chaos must be dissolved or unified in order to regain a state of balance." (Abrahamsen: 2003) Against this background the figure of the hero is presented. The hero's childhood and/or youth is spent in a closed community, in the relatively blessed state of ignorance regarding his/her chosen status as well as the wide world outside

his/her village. This state is suddenly interrupted by a messenger form the outside who reveals a secret, foretells a destiny and invites the hero to leave the comfortable existence and pursue an adventurous quest in the perilous realms. The figure of the messenger, according to the observations of Campbell, usually is mystic, even frightening, for it represents the instinctive, yet unknown levels of the individual's existence (Campbell 1973: 53). The invitation is usually followed by one or several refusals and, finally, agreement, yet it cannot be denied that some heroes seem to be dragged on this path against their will.

The hero then sets on a quest in order to gain or regain something important for the society, most commonly a talismanic object. During the quest the individual must be completely set apart from the familiar world. On this path he is accompanied by helpers – first and foremost an old companion with extensive knowledge and supernatural powers, often represented by a wizard, smith, shepherd or hermit who fulfills the function of the mythical soul's companion on its way to afterworld (ib. 72). The hero is given a talismanic object and crosses one or several thresholds that are guarded by various powers. After crossing the threshold there is no looking back.

The initial part of *Lord of the Ring* presents the typical state of disbalance – the parallel world Middle-Earth is under the constantly growing power of darkness, only in some lonely parts is the illusion of safety preserved. For defeating the shadow an unlikely hero is chosen – a hobbit. Here it must be reminded that initially the archetypal hero more frequently than not appears to have nothing heroic about him, he is "the other": orphan, foundling or an adoptee, seemingly weak and insignificant, to a certain extent representing the holy fool who fearlessly goes where angels dare not tread. This type of the hero in Tolkien's work is embodied in the double character: the "other", orphaned child Frodo and the blessed simpleton Sam. It is hardly a coincidence that the adventures begin as Frodo comes of age (according to Shire standards), although the real quest begins years later. This fact marks the beginning of the initiation rite as a transfer to a new level of consciousness. Frodo thinks his calling a mistake, although deep down is aware of his task as being appointed solely to him. The hero must formally commit to the task, as Frodo

does, agreeing to be the Ring-bearer. Similarly the call is answered by two parallel heroes of the story – the king figure Aragorn and the priest figure Gandalf, although their plotlines have been subjected to Frodo's quest.

Every time when a new stage of the quest begins, the travellers find themselves faced with the described threshold situation and its guardians. According to Campbell, these guardians (Old Man Willow, for example) signal that the temporary horizons have been reached and a new way into darkness and danger opens. (ib. 77) The guardians are also benevolent – such as the archetypal parent figures, seasonal forest spirits Tom Bombadil and Goldberry who offer the childlike hero a safe but non-resident refuge. The hero must not stay under the parents' wing, though, because the true aim of his quest is growing up. The parent figures also remind of the "divine couple" – Adam and Eve archetypes that denote the unfallen state from which the hero must progress forward, into the fall and redemption. This couple is "earthly" and is followed by another, "heavenly" cosmic parent couple – Galadriel and Celeborn later on, who give the hero another refuge, also temporary.

During the second stage of the monomyth the hero must wander on and on, regularly passing through regions that denote subconsciousness, even death – forests and underground. Hero continues to face thresholds and their guardians that are becoming less and less friendly – the Fellowship of the Ring passes through the mines of Moria, gets attacked by wolves and demons. The most important among guardian figures is the female character (goddess or anima) – in Tolkien's case, elf queen Galadriel who tempts each traveller and thus is the most dangerous guardian in accordance of the ambivalence that the mythical thought attributes to woman. The helper figures gradually disappear, so that the hero can undergo the further tribulations without divine support – so Gandalf must die and leave hero to struggle on. This implies an important aspect in the process of initiation – the only way to attain one's true power is to remain without outer help.

The hero then must undergo a series of various tests such as abduction and tracking, fight with the brother or a friend, even the hero's own father (Мелетинский 1994: 7–8), fight with the dragon –

physical monster or one's own inner fears and doubts, and, finally, ritual death or dismemberment. (Campbell 1973: 245) This final desperate situation that often takes place in underground cave or other closed space has been termed by Campbell the "belly of the whale" (an allusion to the Bible story about Jonah) (ib. 90–91). The descent into this space is the process of going down into the depths of one's own soul, return into mother's womb as self-destruction. As put by researcher G. F. Elwood, "the whole adventure, from the viewpoint of the ordinary folks at home, is a death: passing the boundaries, the thresholds, of the known, is equivalent to being swallowed up by a darkness or by a monster. The image of (...) night, cave, the sea or a monster (...) are expressions of a return to the womb – but not for security. The experience necessitates self-annihilation, with all its terrors, for the purpose of rebirth. All three of our heroes have terrifying underground experiences (Gandalf in Moria, Frodo in Shelob's Lair, Aragorn in the Paths of Dead), two of them in confrontation with monsters. When the deepest horror has been faced, there is no longer anything to fear. Sometimes the hero will even defy death." (Elwood 1970: 95–96) The tests are always dual in nature, proving both hero's physical courage and spiritual maturity. While undergoing trials, the hero gains supernatural experience, even epiphany that allows him to view the world in a different light as well as master and synthesize the opposites of the world in his inner being – in C. G. Jung's terminology, to reach his Self. Tolkien's heroes Frodo and Sam must go down in the "belly of the whale" similarly to many mythological heroes. Frodo experiences passing through death and rebirth several times – he wanders away in the shadow world after being stabbed by the Black Rider's dagger, following his own Shadow image – Gollum – through Dead Marshes into the lair of the monster – giant spider Shelb, the anti-goddess figure. Frodo's crises are more physical, while Sam suffers mostly emotionally, saving his master from captivity and torture.

The final trial – decisive conflict with the antagonist sets the quest on the knife-edge. The hero must face and conquer his own Shadow, his darkest enemy, lest it conquers him, though both are in fact one being (Campbell 1973: 108). The hero must omit all that he still

keeps – pride and prejudice, fear, health and even life; so Frodo throws away all his belongings and weapons, in the last moment he leaves even his trusted companion Sam. Each of the heroes in this final stage meets the archenemy that Joseph Campbell considers to be the image of the father, dark animus, authority to be destroyed – Balrog for Gandalf, Denethor for Aragorn, Sauron for Frodo. Frodo is the only one to give up, but his former deeds save him from an evil end – in his stead a shadow double (Gollum) is sacrificed, and the world balance is preserved. Campbell defines the antagonist as a shadow that must dissolve when the light is seen, illusion that disappears in contact with reality, when the hero reaches epiphany. (Ib. 294)

The final stage of the monomyth involves the hero's triumph having reached the double solution – saving the world is equaled to reaching the new level in his own consciousness. However, the cycle can only be fulfilled by return into the point of departure, so each of the three heroes returns where he belongs. The hero must understand that the quest has taken him not to other worlds, but to other aspects of the same familiar reality, heroic Gondor is the same lowbrow Shire. Campbell states that the basic sense of the hero's journey is hidden in revealing the forgotten aspects of everyday life (ib. 217). So the hero returns home bringing new spiritual knowledge, but is disappointingly often met with incomprehension, even contempt, for the society might not be ready for changes. In this case the hero can die or return to the otherworld once more. If the attitude is positive, the hero is glorified. As stated by G. F. Elwood, "The hero's victory, his rebirth is an occasion of splendor – glory for himself, new life for the rest of the world (...) or the boon of new life may be only slowly accepted by a suspicious populace, who cannot see how death can be a source of life, who are too preoccupied with the present and finite to be really interested in the impossible tale of the adventurer. (...) In The Lord of the Rings we see both." (Elwood 1970: 97) Frodo's return to Shire does not bring triumph, but new battles and restorations. At the same time the offspring of the world tree is being planted simultaneously in Gondor and Shire, marriages are celebrated in both countries, so we know that the cosmic order has been renewed, land healed, justice regained, opposites joined –

Aragorn marries elf princess Arwen, uniting human and Elf, mortal and immortal beings. On the other hand, Frodo cannot stay in Middle-Earth and enjoy the plenitude, he is bound to leave for good. Campbell states that, as monomyth reaches its culmination, the cycle must pass on to other stage, because remaining in the state of perfection can cause today's hero become tomorrow's tyrant, who refuses the change – so hero must give up what has been obtained (Campbell 1973: 353) . Thus it becomes clear why Frodo cannot return to the blessed ignorance, cannot heal his wounds otherwise than by going overseas to the land of immortality, i.e., by dying and completing the cycle.

This very brief overview allows us to come to several conclusions. First, it is undeniable that *The Lord of the Rings* is structured according to the basic principles of the monomyth as defined by Campbell, although it is hard to state whether deliberately so. Second, as it has been agreed upon that Tolkien's work served as a model for majority of the later fantasy works, they obviously have inherited also the archetypal structure. So, as the worldview characteristic to fantasy inevitably contains structure of myth, it is possible to conclude, finally, that modern fantasy functions as one of the possible equivalents of myth in today's literary culture, since it serves the same purpose as myths served in classical times: to explore the structures of the soul.

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Dream Poetics as a Method of Performance Analysis

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Theatre has often and from different bases (phenomenological, psychoanalytic) been compared to a dream. Since theatre as an art form is considered to be an imitator of life, and dreams are also commonly made from the stuff of life, a third category is thereby introduced – life. Several classic works in drama are built from the union of life, theatre and dream, such as Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Calderón's *Life Is a Dream*, August Strindberg's *The Way to Damascus* and *A Dream Play*. In my paper, I will focus on the poetic similarity between dream and theatre, by applying dream poetics in my analysis of the staging of *Julia* by Tiit Ojasoo and Ene-Liis Semper (premiered in 2004 in the Estonian Drama Theatre).

In European cultures, attitudes towards dreams can be roughly divided into three: fortune-telling based on dreams (the folk interpretation of dreams), going back to the dreamer's psychical processes (in psychoanalysis) or treating dreaming as an inconvenient side-effect of sleeping, as the brain's waste basket (e.g. in common usage). However, dreams can also be considered from an aesthetic aspect: their non-linear, disjunctive plots and a pronouncedly subjective viewpoints are reminiscent of modernist literature and film, and, to a certain extent, theatre and fine arts as well. Since it is the dreams that first acquaint people with modernist poetics, the observation and analysis of dreams should open up modernist art for a better comprehension.

One of the first formulations and deliberate artistic applications of dream poetics probably comes from August Strindberg, who declares in the introduction to his *A Dream Play*: "In this dream play, the author has, as in his former dream play, *To Damascus*, attempted to imitate the inconsequent yet transparently logical shape of a dream. Everything can happen, everything is possible and probable. Time and place do not exist; on an insignificant basis of reality, the imagination spins, weaving new patterns; a mixture of memories, experiences, free fancies, incongruities and improvisations. The characters split, double, multiply, evaporate, condense, disperse, assemble. But one consciousness rules over them all, that of the dreamer." (Strindberg 1984: 364) Thus the dreamers are both the authors and the spectators of their own dreams, and frequently the protagonists as well. In this manner a curious situation arises where the subject plays the leading part in his or her own dream; as a spectator, identifies fully with his character by vividly experiencing all of his or her fears and desires; and as an author constructs the environment, usually a space-time that counterworks the protagonist. A rather similar multi-focused working method is characteristic of playwrights and stage directors as well.

A popular opinion holds that Strindberg's pre-expressionist plays depict the pronouncedly subjective flow of consciousness, or dreaming, of the author or one of the characters. However, Richard Bark opines that in his dream plays (*The Way to Damascus* (1898–1901), *A Dream Play* (1901), *The Ghost Sonata* (1907)), instead of depicting someone's dreams, Strindberg rather depicts reality as essentially dream-like. His dream technique is primarily based on the disarrangement of time and space: suddenly or gradually, fictional reality turns dreamlike, or alternatively, the "objective" and the dreamlike reality exist in parallel. The protagonist figures as an intermediary between the two worlds, and becomes a spectator of the play-in-play / theatre-in-theatre, or is pulled as a character into the dreamlike reality (Bark 1988: 99–101). Freddie Rokem compares the moving focus, characteristic of several Strindberg's plays, to the effect achieved in novels through using the narrator, or in films by alternating camera positions (Rokem 1988: 112).

The most systematic approach to dream poetics is provided by Sigmund Freud in his *The Interpretation of Dreams* (published in 1900, i.e. in the same decade as Strindberg's dream plays). In the book, he elucidates four mechanisms of dream-work: condensation (*Verdichtung*), displacement (*Verschiebung*), adjustment to the means of representation in dreams (*Darstellbarkeit*) and secondary revision (*Sekundäre Bearbeitung*). In what follows I will take a closer look at these mechanisms.

Dreams are formed by the **condensation** of a vast amount of psychic content, hence the feeling at awakening that we have forgotten most of our dream-work. This is most clearly manifest in composite persons, for whom the common dominates the individual. This however does not lead to the conclusion that one or several dream-thoughts are present in a dream in abbreviated form, but instead that a number of dream-thoughts have been subordinated to a single expression, in which the recurrent and more relevant elements are more distinctively outlined.

Displacement is the distortion of the importance or intensity of an element by another element that is in an associative relationship with the first element. This is primarily caused by the censor – an endopsychic defence, which all elements of a dream must pass through. **Means of representation in dreams** are primarily pictorial, meaning that all dream-thoughts are translated into imagery, symbols and situations. Unlike in verbal language, the expression of logical relationships between the visual fragments of a dream is quite problematic. Interrelated dream-material is combined into a situative or activity-based totality, yet the basis and relation of the combination (comparison, contrast, cause-effect, etc.) remains held in abeyance. **Secondary revision** is the next stage of dream-work, where the dream is reorganized into a coherent and logical whole (Freud 1952: 252–340).

Freud's dream poetics has many affinities with the theory of vectorization used in Patrice Pavis's performance analysis. This theory is inspired by Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which Pavis developed further, drawing from the theories of Roman Jakobson and Jacques Lacan (Pavis 2003: 314). A vector is a force or a movement from a point of origin to a point of arrival (ib. 64). The

construction of a vector, also called vectorization, is defined as a methodological, mnemotechnical and dramaturgical means of linking networks of signs, (ib. 17), as an itinerary of meaning through the labyrinth of signs (ib. 126). Pavis distinguishes four types of vectors, utilized for condensing and restructuring/displacing the initial text or plot into a staging (the creators' viewpoint) and performance (the spectators' viewpoint).

Displacement	**Condensation**
2. Connectors (*connecteurs*) Narrative readability	1. Accumulators (*accumulateurs*) Formal readability
3. Cutters (*sécateurs*) Anti-narrative readability	4. Shifters (*embrayeurs*) Ideological readability

Accumulators and shifters deal with condensation, connectors and cutters deal with displacement. The process of creation and reception begins with the work of accumulators: first, the material, techniques and forms are assembled and condensed. Connectors continue this work on the linear plane, connecting various elements. But in order to integrate the material and to achieve a narrative readability, cutters are also used, accompanied by thematic, geographic and rhythmic interruptions. Simultaneously, cutters indicate a change in the direction of meaning. In combination, the above create an impression of a fragmentary reading. Ultimately, anyone can change their viewpoint and move to the standard ideological level of reading, or contrariwise to swerve off it (ib. 64; 281).

In addition to the concepts of "displacement" and "condensation", there are further similarities between Pavis' and Freud's paradigms. In Freud's terminology, condensation corresponds to accumulators and connectors, and displacement corresponds to cutters and connectors, but in principle all these process are inseparable. Accumulators are used to form the dream-thoughts and to translate them into dream-language, which then produce the pictorial-verbal material present in the dream. Cutters and connectors work on the syntactic level, assembling the material according to the logic of dreams. Shifters are evidently connected with the secondary treat-

ment of a dream, as in this phase the goal is to construct a formally and ideologically coherent totality.

Nevertheless, Pavis does not reduce the theory of vectorization only to pure structural activity, but also includes phenomenological effects, such as bodily and spatial energies, and calls vectorization the semiotization of desire (ib. 93, 313). This concept is spectacularly apt in characterising the etiology and ontology of dreams.

The theory of vectorization can in principle be applied to an analysis of any art form. It helps us understand the operations used by artists and receivers for creating a coherent, logical totality out of the most heterogeneous and fragmentary material. The theory of vectorization can be applied on different levels of a work of art, but it is most successful on larger structural units, such as for considering the representation and reception of a character, scene, topic, story or object as a whole. It should be emphasized that the strategies used by the author for the unification, cutting and shifting of the viewpoints of the work's material may not coincide with the corresponding operations of the spectators, since the latter have the right and the freedom to treat the material assembled by the author in their own way. The recipients constantly work in two contrary directions: on the one hand they attempt to decode the work and the author's vectorization activities on the level of elementary units (to find referents for the signs, to fill in the gaps "cut" by the author, to discover association principles and the author's intentions, etc.), on the other hand they conduct a novel secondary treatment by considering the work as a complete and meaningful phenomenon.

In his theory of vectorization, Patrice Pavis also employs a comparison with classical tropes. The work of vectors dealing with displacement is similar to metonyms, replacing one element with another (the connector), or splitting the links of the chain in order to move in a novel direction (the cutter). The work of vectors dealing with condensation is similar to metaphors, which collect and unite the elements (the accumulator) or establish access to a different sphere (the shifter) (ib. 314). Hayden White brings a more specific viewpoint into this paradigm, by proceeding from Freud's dream poetics: condensation corresponds to metaphor, displacement corresponds to metonymy, adjusting to the means of representation

in dreams can be compared to synecdoche and secondary revision to irony. A **metaphor** (*metaphora* – Greek for "transfer") is based on a **similarity** between two or more objects of a different kind. However, metaphor is a trope that both condenses the material, as well as displaces/replaces its form and meaning, and often presents it with a pictorial appearance. We must therefore narrow White's conception of metaphor down: "Condensation, in short, is Freud's term for those complex metaphors which gather other, simpler metaphorical images together into a chain of associations [...]" (White 1999: 111). **Metonymy** (*metōnymia* – Greek for "a change of name") presumes a spatial or temporal **continuity** and is therefore primarily related associatively with mobile dream-thoughts that connect different objects and events. Whereas metaphor operates on the synchronic level of dreams, metonymy operates on the diachronic level. **Synecdoche** (sunekdokhē – Greek for "a receiving together or jointly") presumes **hidden** shared essential characteristics in two objects, so that a part can stand for the whole, or vice versa. Thus, in addition to pictorial representation, a synecdoche also condenses the material and to an extent also displaces meaning. **Irony** (eirōneia – Greek for "dissembler") demands a fundamental **contrast** between things or characteristics usually considered as similar or related. Secondary revision is ironic, as it intermediates between those manifest characteristics of dreams that are identical to dream-thoughts and the censor's imperatives on the one hand, and on the other hand distances itself critically from the contents of dreams, and tries to rewrite or deny the meaning and significance in them. In a sense, all dreams, just like poetic allegories, are ironic: they tell you one thing while meaning another (ib. 107).

White's conception, however, cannot be considered clear and persuasive: while metaphor and irony can generally be aligned with condensation and secondary revision of Freud's dream poetics, the examples presented about metonymy and synecdoche are too close to the principles of metaphoric transfer, and are at times entirely dependent on the whims and interpretations of the researcher.

In his monograph *Dreaming and Storytelling*, Bert O. States compares dreams to fictional narratives and finds both essential similarities as well as differences between the two. He emphasizes

that dreams are primarily characterised by the following phenomenological attributes: the subjects' credulous attitude to what is being seen, the apparently auto-generative and autonomous force of dream images, the stupendous power of simple images in provoking an extreme emotional charge, and the subjects' helplessness when faced with their own creation. Less relevant, but nevertheless commonplace are the following factors: the subjects' delusive memories, the fragmentary nature of the story, absence of details, etc. (States 1993: 9) States's point of view explicitly reveals the differences between a performance and a dream: theatre's options for expressing and conveying a total emotional experience are limited. Obviously, the premises and aims of both theatre and dreams are different. Due to its collective nature, theatre attempts to unite different subjects and consciousnesses in its process of creation and reception, being in practice perhaps too much dependent on general interests and tastes. Dreaming, on the other hand, is a deeply individual process, where the creator (the unconscious) knows the recipient (consciousness) almost completely and perfectly and is capable of exploiting the advantages this presents.

Since the dream poetics as developed by Freud is a comprehensive and systematic theory, and also of interest to the author, in what follows I will focus on its application for analysing the play *Julia* by Ojasoo and Semper. It should nevertheless be emphasized that dream poetics is not something so specific that it can only be applied to works presented as dreams. Rather, it should be treated as a modelling machine that can reveal certain concealed structural or meaningful units of some plays, and may remain inapplicable for other works.

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Julia is clearly framed and formatted as a dream. There are hints of this already early in the performance, when the actor Rasmus Kaljujärv announces: "Julia is a day-dream of actresses, they dream of it..." Mirtel Pohla soon follows this up as Julia in the balcony scene (using the words of Shakespeare's Romeo): "O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard, / Being in night, all this is but a dream /

Too flattering-sweet to be substantial" (Shakespeare; Semper; Ojasoo 2004: 5). This scene names the dreaming subject – Julia. The performance ends with Julia's awakening: a sudden fall through the stage floor to reality. The nightmarish dream is over.

Dreams are primarily compiled from memories, the remains of the day, and bodily sensations fixed in the subject's memory. A spectator even remotely acquainted with Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is struck by a dream-like recognition: the cues, characters and scenes seem familiar, but there is something amiss in both the primary constellation as well as in individual details. As the performance hastily slips past the eyes, there is no time to reminisce about how it "really" was in Shakespeare's own words. A paradox!

In *Julia*, **condensation** appears on two levels: art (both Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and Semper – Ojasoo's *Julia*) is usually condensed from the material of life, and stagings of classical plays are in their own turn often condensations of written material. Semper and Ojasoo have condensed Shakespeare's text both on the narrative level and the level of characters. While Shakespeare names 22 characters, in addition to musicians and townsfolk, Semper – Ojasoo limit themselves to 14 characters and 8 actors. As the real actors play the actors working in the theatre, in addition to the roles in *Romeo and Juliet* (with the sole exception of the home-Romeo played by Kaljujärv), the number of fictional characters is increased to at least 21. Thus in this particular play a large amount of fictional material is condensed into just seven persons – into actors whose identity on stage is recurrently heterogeneous. With this in mind, we can consider the characters as having compound identities. The world of the staging is further complicated by the fact that the actors also play themselves: Mirtel Pohla as a novice actress, Mait Malmsten as a star actor and a performer of romantic heroes, Kaie Mihkelson as an experienced professional, etc. Altogether, we can consider *Julia* as having three intertwined levels: the real (actors as human beings), the fictional (the actors played by the actors, plus Kaljujärv's Romeo), and the fiction-in-fiction (the characters in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*). Every consecutive level takes in, toys with, and clarifies, in addition to itself, the preceding "reality"

as well, and also alters it to a certain extent. In the present case, the staging and dreams proceed from similar strategies.

The integration of persons and things, where the similarity is already apparent in the dream-material, is called **identification** by Freud, and the situation where the similarity / collation is yet to be created is called the **composition**. Both identification and composition can be based on manifest, concealed, and desired similarities (Freud 1952: 258–269). Anti Reinthal fulfils the function of Romeo's friend as Mercutio, Benvolio and brother Lorenzo (plus Capuletti's servant Gregorio). For his physical and behavioural qualifications, the actor seems best suited for the roles of Romeo's friends, but also the role of brother Lorenzo, as they all act in the interests of the lovers. This seems to be a case of both manifest (Mercutio = Benvolio) as well as concealed (friend = brother = Lorenzo = the church) identification. The fusion of the aforementioned characters and Gregorio as the servant of the opposing camp may be an incidental or a deliberate composition. The characters portrayed by Margus Prangel (Julia's bridegroom Paris, the servants Pietro and Samson, as well as brother Lorenzo in Julia's confession scene) primarily represent the interests of the Capulettis, and are based on an identification derived from concealed similarity. Kaie Mihkelson as a cold and lean enchantress could perhaps perform signora Capuletti, but her suitability for the role as a wet-nurse is questionable at best. However, the actress-Julia, the implicit producer of this particular staging, expects motherly advice and assistance for her first job at the theatre from the more experienced colleague, while as the character of Julia she longs for her Mother to be as understanding and tender as the Wet-nurse. Thus in this case we are primary dealing with a desire-composition. As the Ego of the actress playing the Mother-Nurse is extremely firm or rigid, and dominates both of her roles, Julia's oedipal fear and anger towards her Mother-Nurse becomes intelligible from the perspective of both the character as well as the actress. And Ojasoo indeed does expect the actors in his plays to portray not illustrative and individualized, but archetypal and conceptual roles (see e.g. Epner 2005: 32–34).

However, as I previously pointed out, condensation can not be reduced to an unambiguous truncation. Thus in *Julia* some characters

are dispersed between two actors. Romeo the romantic lover is played in domestic scenes by Rasmus Kaljujärv, and by Mait Malmsten in theatre-scenes. Brother Lorenzo is portrayed both by Margus Prangel and Anti Reinthal, whose physical similarity allows them to be seen as doubles. And it is suitable that the role of Lorenzo, as the intermediary between the two camps, is played both by Reinthal, who belongs to Romeo's camp, and by Prangel, who usually plays the members of the fellowship of the Capulettis.

Thus this particular performance utilizes the bricolage technique so intrinsic to theatre: a free combination of handy materials and individuals. Yet the actors do not attempt to isolate their different roles in order to aid the spectator, but rather emphasize their own skills and chances as actors to compress and interchange identities. Looking at the party of actors functioning swiftly and skilfully on stage reminds us of the original meaning of the word "bricoleur": a person who does odd jobs and is a jack of all trades (see Lévi-Strauss 1991: 38). Dream poetics is itself based on bricolage: a new formal and meaningful totality is assembled from materials at hand, the elements of which have nevertheless not lost its connection with the original "mother text".

Even though theatre and dreams use bricolage as if for reasons of economy or perforce, their activities simultaneously include a lot of playful elements: fortuity and profusion (repetition). In *Julia*, in addition to the condensation of characters and narrative, the technique of pastiche is also applied, by developing various stylistic devices into a totality, such as the theatrical tradition of staging Shakespeare, and the aesthetics of musicals (independent songs), Italian neorealist films (black outfits, cigarette puffing, sexy movements and hip-grinding), and kung-fu films (the beautiful slow-motion swordfight between the two Romeos). Not to mention the Babel of Estonian, Russian and Seto languages. Thus *Julia* accumulates a number of different texts, styles and discourses that together establish a dreamy and defamiliar artistic whole.

Means of representation in dreams are primarily pictorial and hence the reason why their meaning is so frequently difficult to grasp. As with dreams, we can discuss the latent and manifest content of art. The manifest content is comprised of the characters on

stage, the story told by the performance, and above all words as means of expression, the significance of which is more firmly culturally fixed than pictorial language. "Theatre should be conceived as a social and institutionalized form of "dreaming" (i.e., thinking by means of the same method of representation), which incorporates additional cultural structural layers, thus enabling society to confront even unconscious thoughts and assimilate them into a complex and comprehensive conception of life" (Rozik 2002: 250). The constitutive polysemy of dreams and the language of the arts makes their latent content difficult to rationalize both for the censors and for the wider audience, which for the former represents concealed problems, and overt pleasure for the latter. With both good art and dreams, the spectator feels that the deeper, latent meaning of the object remains concealed, and only beckons alluringly from time to time. And it is from this desire to understand that the psychoanalytics and art critics make their living.

By reading the dramaturgic text of *Julia*, one only grasps the general flow of the story of *Romeo and Juliet*; but the purpose of the staging is indeed not a retelling of this all too familiar love story, which remains only the impetus. The recurring theme of the staging seems to be the exploration of the relationships between life and theatre, face and mask, individual/Ego and role, sincerity and play, naturalness and acting. This is handled behind the words, by holding up the text and structure of Shakespeare's play as a shield, while at the same time toying with the paralinguistic and kinetic means of expression of the text. We can say that in this particular play, the most relevant "dream thoughts" or ideas have been translated into pictorial and auditory language, and only the familiar phrases, which conceal the latent meaning of the staging, are actually recited.

One of the means of expression of dreams is inversion: dreams tend to conflate opposites or to represent some element of a dream-thought through its opposite (Freud 1952: 272). This problem is first and foremost connected with the primary topic of the staging. Characteristic of dream poetics, the visual arts are incapable of expressing the relationship "life is like theatre" or "theatre is like life" without words, and must use a metaphor instead of a comparison, where the comparison basis has been fused with the thing

compared: "life is theatre", "life = theatre", "theatre of life", "life of theatre". The staging does show that life and theatre, as well as Ego and role are inseparable, but this seems like an obvious and acceptable verity already at the beginning of the performance. Consequently, if these concepts are in fact inseparable, we must then inquire as to how do we nevertheless perceive their constant dialectical presence? I ask rhetorically with Anti Reinthal's Actor: "If Romeo kisses Julia, then who exactly does he kiss?"

Nevertheless, we can take a further step back from distinguishing between actors as individuals and their artistic (or social) roles and ask: who is the individual / Julia really? Is a person identifiable according to his or her outward appearance (such as with an ID card), or his or her internal Ego? Literary characters usually lack their own visual "face", especially in drama texts, but there at least they have their "own" recognizable "voice" and text. When theatre, film and dreams translate the verbal material into visual language, the characters acquire faces, but they are nevertheless primarily recognized by the familiar text, behavioural pattern or life story. However, the spectators may still feel that this Julia is not the proper Julia, but only her double, a formal fulfilment of a role, whose appearance or behaviour does not completely correspond with the recipient's conception of the character. In questions of identification, the dreamer always trusts his or her internal instincts that can unerringly specify an individual's substantial Ego, and is not lead astray by the changing visual form. To a certain extent, this principle works in real life as well, but in theatre things seem to be more complex, as the social task of actors is to change constantly, and this makes the relationship between appearances and reality considerably more problematic.

The primary purpose of **displacement** as a mechanism in dream poetics is to conceal relevant dream thoughts and elements, in order to distract the censor's attention.

Many of the displacements in dreams are associated with erotic desires. In *Julia*, however, sexuality is made constantly and unambiguously explicit. I will present only a few choice examples of the manner and style of the double entendres, which are usually derived from Shakespeare's text and could easily fit into a psychoanalytic

handbook. When Gregorio (Anti Reinthal) orders Samson (Margus Prangel) to pull out his tool, obviously meaning the sword, the latter repeatedly attempts to open his zipper. Samson also promises the maidens to pierce their heads, that is, their maidenheads. Using the wet-nurse's text, Kaie Mihkelson tells her daughter about her husband's teachings, that while as children girls fall on their knees, as maidens they should rather fall on their backs. And as Julia's mother she praises the potential son-in-law to her daughter, while at the same time lasciviously stroking Paris's hip: "So shall you share all that he doth possess / By having him, making yourself no less" (Shakespeare; Semper, Ojasoo 2004: 19). When Romeo meets Julia in the very first rehearsal, Romeo places his role-book between his legs, where it signifies an erect penis. The second act of this sexually pregnant staging is punch-lined by the historic costumes of the male characters, with decorative groin-bags attached to their pants.

Since *Julia* makes the sexual desires of the characters explicit instead of concealing them, dream poetics must be revised accordingly. The past hundred years that lay between Freud's psychoanalytic treatment and the present day have witnessed bodily liberation and sexual revolutions, meaning that sexuality has penetrated from private sphere to the public sphere, including art. Sexuality has been culturally legitimized though the discourse of love. First and foremost, it is popular culture (television, advertisements, both women's and men's magazines) that tends to explicitly emphasize the primacy of this aspect of life among other needs. Sexuality is not just part of the public sphere (in the sense of representations), but also an object of public discussions.

From a contemporary view-point it seems that since at the dawn of psychoanalysis in the early years of the 20th century, physical love was repressed both in the public and the private sphere, it must have invaded the people's dream thoughts more forcefully and in a more encoded fashion. As today sexual representations are a natural part of the reality of life, they arrive in art and dreams through real memories. It is probably accurate to say that the equivocations and erotic signs and games which we would consider quotidian were represented in *Julia* with only a slight artistic condensation. (Not a single critic deemed it worthwhile to even comment on the erotic

aspects of the staging.) Thus according to the logic of dream poetics and displacement strategies, these publicly exposed displays of desires and wishes should not be the primary topic of this staging or the main character. Nevertheless, it appears that this is exactly so. The brusque and cynical, almost mandatory sexuality that is thrust upon Julia in both theatre and in life, hidden behind Shakespeare's romantic love story, seems to be one of the primary generators of this dream/ staging.

Secondary revision is a stage in the process of arranging the material that both the dreamers and dream interpreters, both the creators and the recipients of artistic works go through. In dreams, secondary revision is more concealed and less conscious, and hence more difficult to verbalise. Art, however, proceeds from acknowledged or simply conventionalised traditions of a particular form and genre of art, or more generally from the practices of creating fictional worlds. Thus Sprinchorn has pointed out that the mirror structure of Strindberg's plays – repeating or replaying some of the early scenes at the end of the play – emphasizes their cyclic composition, and that this is done for the same purpose of Freud's secondary revision (ref. Rokem 1988:117).

In *Julia,* repeated scenes constantly emphasize the need to revise the information. Several repetitions in the staging are associated with standard theatre practices, such as the process of rehearsals; however, there are also more deliberate treatments. Act II, scene 2 in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, or the famous balcony scene, is played by Julia at the very beginning of the performance together with her home-Romeo, and she later repeats it with her theatre partner during rehearsals. On both occasions the words remain alien to those who utter them – they are reciting the words of a long-dead man, and are being theatrical about it – but the questions and the answers that are physically and paralinguistically dispatched along with the words differ, changing from open seduction to the first timid attempts to get the feel of one another.

Scene 5 of act III of *Romeo and Juliet,* which takes place in Julia's bedroom, is also performed twice: in an everyday, bored way after the night spent with theatre-Romeo, minimising the text of the play, which can be interpreted as fiction (theatrical reality) or as

fiction-in-fiction (a rehearsal or performance in performance), and once again at the end of the performance, at the passing of home-Romeo to the other side, with sincere speech acts that are true to the author's text, and with domesticated, espoused words. However, the second treatment is most notable because of a clear contrast, or even inversion of the two video scenes: Romeo and Julia's lustful seduction scene / rehearsal at home one the one hand, and the later replaying of this very same configuration as a rape. An analogous, but contrary reassessment takes place at the end of the performance, where Julia declares home-Romeo an endearing friend and theatre-Romeo a cold-faced gambler.

All the aforementioned primary and secondary treatments are concerned with a single theme – seeking and experimenting with the possibilities of using words to express love. Home-Romeo and Julia strive to use authentic means of expression to convey this emotion, whereas theatre-Romeo attempts to cover up his emotional life with as believable copying of emotional conventions as possible. Particular ways or styles notwithstanding, the traditional formulas remain reiterated, and the feeling of failure forces repeated attempts to try again, to re-work the tradition.

The image of Julia and Romeo's home that frames the staging also undergoes complex secondary revision. Initially, the room is presented to the spectators through video images, thus creating a feeling of space outside the stage and outside the temporal span of the performance through technical mediation, although during each performance Kaljujärv names the correct date of the performance. This impression is further supported by a wider theatrical and cultural tradition: film or video images are usually temporally and spatially disassociated from their reception. The spectators are surprised when after Julia's rape the very same room is revealed to have been located backstage, behind a curtain, which immediately rises the question as to why the game with the video camera was even necessary. The stage, photos, and movie cameras primarily work to focus our attention, presuming that there is an observing subject and an observed object. A video camera turns home from a private sphere into an arena of spectacle and acting, and people into actors in the play of life, whose activities are directed by a gaze

residing outside of them, be it their partner or that person him or herself (e.g. by filming a home video). This extra-subjective focus is usually considered to be the basis for the theatralization of everyday life. But in a world of simulation and simulacra, the disappearance of the subject, focus and centre is accompanied by the end of perspective and panoptic space, and the destruction of spectacles and the spectacle society (Baudrillard 1999: 49–50). The absence of rigid focus and clear separation between the natural and the artificial, between life and spectacle, is vividly demonstrated in *Julia*. Paradoxically, in this staging the two-dimensional image of the video represents mediated reality, or first level fiction, i.e. sincerity and naturalness, whereas flesh and bone persons on stage represent social roles and characters as fiction in fiction.

A comparison of the framing scenes of the staging reveals that a certain re-assessment in Julia's attitudes does take place. The austere and disconsolate studio lighting in the first two studio scenes is later replaced by an image of home full of warm yellow light, an everyman's dream, towards which Julia purposefully walks. The yearning for a dependable and safe refuge (world?) can be considered as the activating force behind Julia's dream, that is displaced desire, which the dream brings forth and towards which Julia strives for the entire duration of the story. Frequently in dreams the dreamer has a particular obsession – to reach someplace, to do something – but its execution becomes unexpectedly difficult due to every possible obstacle. This also obtains more generally for a particular existential situation, where the discerned internal or external discord prompts a person to action in order to change the situation. And indeed it is the drama texts and theatre as art forms which represent active people that tend to prefer this aspect of life as their object of portrayal. In theatrical parlance, the compulsion that impels a character / role to action is called a super-objective.

Conclusion. Georges Baal has referred to the concept of "stage" as belonging both to the discourse of theatre and psychoanalysis, and to the possibility of extending Lacan's concept of the mirror phase into the domain of theatre (Baal 1991: 51–56). The stage serves as the mirror/other, that mirrors the real and where the interplay of self and

Other culminates in the formation of the subject on the symbolic plane. In theatre, both the actor and the spectator are placed into a mirror phase: for the actor, the Other is represented by both the character and the spectators, and for the spectator, the Other is represented by the character and/or the actor. An individual becomes an actor in a place of acting and showing – the stage – when at least one other person (colleague, stage director, spectator) looks on. The subject's own outline is brought into consciousness in the mirror of the Other, the character: the differences and concurrences between the subject's and the character's concepts of the self are hereby revealed. For Julia, theatre and dreams are a process of self-awareness and self-exploration, through which she tries out her own fit with her pre-given role, theatre, and the world. For the spectators, the actor/character becomes their second self, the absent substitute, through whom they enter the fictional world, and with whom they sympathize or identify. The breach between the self and the reflection begins to generate desires in the subject.

Dream poetics emphasise the relativity and instability of reality, a discord between the mask and the face, between appearance and substance. "If we can create a dream atmosphere on the stage of our minds, and in our theaters, we will gain the impression of a much truer reality, as if we were seeing behind the surface of illusion and reality into inner reality." (Bark 1988: 105)

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Director as Playwright in Postdramatic Theatre

LUULE EPNER

By now the tension between (dramatic) text and (theatrical) performance has strongly influenced the theatre processes for at least a century. A fraction of the director-centred theatre, born during the turn of 19th and 20th centuries, strove to the emancipation from literature and promoted the development of non-verbal theatrical language. This tendency was strongly pronounced in the avant-garde movement at the beginning of the 20th century and also in Antonin Artaud's theatre theory. As a result of internal developments and pressured by the rapid changes in the performing arts, the traditional dramatic form went into crisis, and the attempts to overcome it brought along great changes in the poetics of drama – described in detail by Peter Szondi (Szondi 1956). In contemporary perspective, the "crisis" of dramatic form that includes the crises of story, character, dialogue and stage – audience relationship, is understood to be a permanent phenomenon without any final solution — actually the motor for the renewal of drama (Sarrazac 2005: 19–20). Drama theory has had to cope with crises or innovations in modern playwriting by elaborating new concepts and new analytical tools. One of basic new theoretical notions is p o s t d r a m a t i c (text/theatre), introduced by Hans-Thies Lehmann in his influential book *Postdramatisches Theater* (1999) to describe recent trends in theatre. As a matter of fact, Lehmann defines postdramatic theatre from two perspectives. Firstly, it emphasises that the written text no longer functions as the central element of, nor the pre-establishing generative matrix for the performance, governing its meaning (see

Lehmann 1999: 73). The written text can be used in many different ways dependent on theatre practitioners' interests and purposes. Secondly, this notion refers to the radical departure from the traditional (dramatic) paradigm, organised around coherent narrative, characters in dialogue, etc; in this sense *drama* has long functioned as the latent norm for theatre productions and their reception (ib. 1999: 49–50). The present article deals primarily with the first aspect – interrelations between present-day writing for the stage and theatre practice.

The shift of emphasis from text's structure to its functioning in the theatrical context has to be taken into account in theoretical models of analysis. First we should consider the broadening of the meaning of the concepts *text*, *theatre* and *performance*, which among other things result in preferring the concepts *textuality*, *performativity*, *theatricality* that emphasise the characteristics or the effects of the object over the object itself. In her article *Für eine Ästhetik des Performativen* Erika Fischer-Lichte defines the tension relation between textuality and performativity as the factor that constitutes the theatre (Fischer-Lichte 2001: 143). Like many other theatre researchers, she considers the emergence of the performative function to be the characteristic of the contemporary theatre and points out two main tendencies: intensifying performativity along with a heavy reduction of textuality (e.g. Robert Wilson, contemporary dance theatre) and reflecting performativity using theatrical means that bring out the new kind of tension relation between textuality and performativity (e.g. Frank Castorf, Einar Schleef et al) (ib. 146). *Textuality*, as well as *performativity* refers to the widening of the notions *text* and *performance* in the spirit of post-structuralist theories. Within the framework of structuralism, text was defined as a set of (primarily) linguistic elements that have been linearly and hierarchically aligned and which, according to Juri Lotman, are mainly characterised by structurality, explicitness and delimitedness. Post-structuralist theories on the other hand, consider the text to be not a fixed object but a dynamic process, a signifying practice (*signifikante Praxis*) that functions in an intertextual network and in a specific social context (Kolesch 2005: 332–334). Dynamics also characterises the definition of performativity. Erika Fischer-Lichte

sees the performativity as the performance of actions, their self-reflectivness and their reality constituting nature (Fischer-Lichte 2001: 326).

As to *theatricality*, it can be defined from quite a number of theoretical perspectives – anthropological, aesthetic, transcultural category, etc – which is why the choice must be made depending on one's objectives. I prefer the aesthetic perspective and the definition that originates in the search "for the essential features that make the theatre recognizable as itself, as a performed art form"; in this case, theatricality contains characteristics that meet a minimum standard of "stageability" (Postlewait; Davis 2003: 21). Constitutive elements are a specific space, and bodily presence of performers and spectators in this space. And that is how Samuel Weber understands theatricality – as a medium, an opposite to imitations and/or stories, which have always been used to define the theatre and theatricality. In his words, theatre as a medium appears when the place, where an event occurs, reveals itself to be a "stage" (Weber 2004: 7). The place becomes the "stage", when viewing has been activated as an act of sensing and understanding – space contains the viewer, to whom are addressed the events or images that the "stage" shows. Michael Vanden Heuvel incorporates the viewer in the definition for the theatre as well, but he places a special emphasis on the eventness: theatre is "the event – inscribed within a text or improvised by performers – that is enacted before a spectator" (Vanden Heuvel 1994: 6).

In this theoretical perspective the textuality, performativity and theatricality are the dimensions of any performance event (see Shepherd; Wallis 2004: 163), and it can be claimed that so are the dimensions of any dramaturgical text, if we were to view it not as an object but also as a process. These are complementary, not mutually exclusive phenomena. Let us emphasise that generally, text/textuality and performance/performativity do not oppose on the linguistic – non-linguistic axis, thus both categories can be used when discussing drama as well as performances.

However, besides their heuristic value so broad notions also carry certain risks, first and foremost the risk to lose its operational power if they start signifying everything and nothing specific at once. Their

content and meaning should be defined and specified according to the artistic norms, dominating discourse and specific sociocultural context, which influence literary texts as well as performances of the time. This becomes obvious in the concept of postdramatic theatre as well. Dramatic text is based on the action, dialogue and characters and the corresponding theatre-definition includes the requirement for depicting the reality and the actor – role dialectic. Postdramatic theatre uses the new dramaturgical logic and reorganises the relations of text and performance; nevertheless, this does not mean that textuality would disappear in its broader sense, i.e. practice of "production" of meaning.

When analysing the social and cultural framework where the text functions, the institutions and persons who control and direct theatre processes must be taken into account. One can consider as especially important the manifestations of the authorial function in contemporary theatre. The present article focuses on a phenomenon that is quite common for the present-day theatre, when stage directors themselves have written texts (or scripts) for the productions. The reciprocal impact of writing for the stage and staging written text can obviously not be overlooked in these cases. How the director uses his/her own text? Is the "directors' dramaturgy" specifically postdramatic practice?

In the present article I will analyse two texts and their staging: *Vaimude tund Kadrioru lossis* (An Hour of Ghosts in the Castle Kadriorg, 2000, Estonian Drama Theatre), and *Stiil ehk Mis on maailma nimi* (Style, or What is the Name of the World, 2003, Von Krahl Theatre) by Estonian director Mati Unt (1944–2005). Mati Unt started his career in the 1960s as a prose writer. He was one of the leaders of the so called sixties generation, critically acclaimed and often translated writer, whose works of the 1960s and 70s represent the Estonian literary modernism of highest degree, while the novels *Sügisball* (The Autumn Ball, 1979) and *Öös on asju* (Things in the Night, 1990) mark the breakthrough of postmodernism in Estonian literature.[1] At the same time, Unt had strong ties with theatre: from

[1] *The Sügisball* has been translated, for instance, into Finnish (1980), Swedish (1983), German (1987), Polish (1988), etc; *Öös on asju* has recently been published in English.

1966–1981 he worked in theatres as a dramaturge, beginning with the 1978 started continuously to stage plays and in the 1990s he occupied one of the centre positions in Estonian theatre as director. Unt started his work in theatre carrying all the symbolic capital gathered as a writer, but he emphasised that for him, theatre is an independent art form: "I have never staged plays as a writer or a critic, as a man of letters … All my literary ideas I realise on paper, in theatre I start with the space or the actor." (Unt 1990: 11). He supported the idea that when it comes to literary texts, theatre (director) is independent, however, at the same time he claimed that the authorship in contemporary theatre has actually been reduced to only one function: director is not the sole author but rather organises a kind of cluster or tangled web consisting of his own as well as the writer's, scenographer's, actors' and others' intentions (Unt 1999). As a general rule, Unt rewrote in depth the texts that he used in his plays (often the world and Estonian literary classics). One can mention few examples like *Hot* (the modernised version of Shakespeare's *Othello*), *Kärbeste saar* (The Island of Flies; an assembly of texts with island motifs, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest* as dominant texts), *Vend Antigone, ema Oidipus* (Brother Antigone, Mother Oedipus; on the basis of tragedies by Sophocles and Aeschylos). Quite a number of adaptations were published under Mati Unt's name and have won literary awards.

Chosen productions are notable in Unt's general theatre work body by the fact that they have used texts that rather lack in dramaturgical potential and are not easily adaptable to theatre: the base text for *Vaimude tund,* Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* (orig. *La poétique de l'espace*, 1957, trans. into Estonian in 1999), is a philosophical essay, the base text for *Stiil* is Peet Vallak's three-page short story "Country Woman" (1921) that has practically no events happening at all. In both cases we are dealing with a kind of theatrical *tour de force*. The theatrical context, the director's objectives and dramaturgical strategies however are quite different.

Vaimude tund was staged in Estonian Drama Theatre – in greatest Estonian drama theatre, which operates under the motto "something for everyone", or in other words – artistic diversity. Besides traditional psychological realism there is also moderate experimentalism,

mostly on small stage of the theatre. The starting impulse for Unt's production did not come from the text but from the place and the actors: a wish to stage an intimate play in a so-called found place, using two actors with whom the director had worked together for some time. Text had to be chosen pursuant to the specifics of the place and the actors' type of talent. The place chosen for the play was baroque-styled Castle Kadriorg, in the middle of an old park, built by the orders of Peter I in 18th century as a summer house for the Russian royal family. In year 2000 there was a department of Estonian Art Museum in the castle, as well as occasional classical music concerts. Bachelard's phenomenological work, which, in author's words, considers "the problems posed by the poetic imagination" and the images of space in literature and philosophy (Bachelard 1969: XI), suited to such a special place. *The Poetics of Space* is the dominant base text, complemented by relatively few similarly themed quotes from other texts: some sentences from the article "Language" by Martin Heidegger and from the essay "The Poetry of Space" by Estonian architect Vilen Künnapu, and a poem by the poet and the actor Juhan Viiding, which concludes the play. A few playful hints to theatre theory – Peter Brook and Stanislavsky – have been added. Following the example of the base text, the play is structured according to themes, however, the titles overlap with the chapters of *The Poetics of Space* only in parts: 1) Silence, 2) Soul and space, 3) Things, drawers, chests and wardrobes, 4) Shells, 5) Miniature, 6) Dreams of the house, 7) Verticality, 8) Fire and winter, 9) Nests, 10) Corners, 11) Expanse and the plains, 12) Door, 13) Tempest, 14) Darkness and space, 15) Finale. Of course, only a small part of the base text is used, the order of sentences has been changed, and phrases from other texts have been assembled between them.

Unt presents the fragments from Bachelard's text as a dialogue between the man and the woman, whose character-names are Lord (Guido Kangur) and Lady (Viire Valdma), as appropriate for the residents of such a fancy castle. A third "character" of the play was the girl who played the contrabass (Lea-Liisbet Peterson), and expressed herself through musical sounds – at first glance, a marginal, but actually an important figure in the aesthetic system of this play. While Bachelard's arguments are based on several examples from belletristic

works (for example the fiction of Henri Bosco and Hermann Hesse, the poetry of Rilke and Rimbaud, etc) and on quotes from the works of other thinkers (e.g. Carl Gustav Jung, Henri Bergson, etc), Unt uses different text layers as an equivalent material. The authors of quotes are referenced quite rarely, also, each time, the quotes are presented as something heard, not read. For example:

> LADY: Rilke has sometimes spoken me of the pleasure he felt when he saw a box that closed well. (P 5)
> LADY: Robinet said to me that the Conch of Venus represents a woman's vulva. (P 7)[2]

In *Vaimude tund* there are mainly two directing strategies at work, reflected as hints in the written text, but reaching their full effect only on stage, where non-verbal theatrical codes are added to verbal text. These can be called fictionalisation and aesthetisation strategies. First strategy means that the structural characteristics of dramatic form are added to verbal text (the phenomenological description of things and spaces) – constructing fiction into philosophy. Nevertheless, there won't be a completely continuous and coherent fictional world. The space where the performance takes place, a baroque hall in Castle Kadriorg, depicts itself, not some fictional place: there is no scenery, the barriers remind us the fact that the furniture belongs to museum. Time is fictionalised by dialogue, but since the speakers refer to different time periods, the time of events can not be firmly defined. History is brought in by Lady who, at the beginning of the play, returns to Lord waiting in the castle. Lady mentions meeting celebrities from different eras: on the one hand Hesse and Rilke, and on the other, 18–19th century philosopher Robinet, etc (compare with quote above). The "all-timeness" (or, time of performance) comes from the fact that Bachelard's essay which quotes works from different eras, has been transposed as personal experiences of Lady and Lord, experiences that they share with each other. The experience comprises the memories (childhood, meetings, books that they have read, paintings they've seen, etc) as well as palpably immediate experiences that take place during the

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[2] All references are to the manuscripts of the plays.

performance: the cabinets and desks give rise to contemplation concerning space, a tour to cellar (the audience hears that part of the dialogue on tape), there are descriptions of scenes that are supposedly seen from the window, etc. Along with the personalisation of space experience, the speakers attain the features of individualised characters (they are not merely "voices"), the relationships between them become more concrete and the beginnings of narrative appear. However, in the dialogue, there are very few direct hints to the story of Lord and Lady; one example is on page 19:

> LORD: /---/ For example, that little dark corner between the fireplace and the oak chest where I used to hide when you left me.
> LADY: You used to cower in here…?
> LORD: Yes.
> LADY (*to contrabass player*): He used to cower in here? (*Contrabass player nods. Lady turns to Lord.*) All that time… all these years?

This example also shows the position of the contrabass girl in this fragmented narrative. She is alternately the confident of both parties and sometimes implies the possibility of a love triangle to the man-woman duet – for example when the Lord starts to flirt with the girl while the Lady is away and when the Lady returns, he starts talking about flowers in a vase, in order to avoid an uncomfortable moment. However, for the most part the narrativisation and psychologisation takes place through non-verbal acting codes (intonation, gestures, postures, mimics), which are used rather independently from text semantics. Written text is a monological dialogue, which is characterised by the consensus between partners, that is, there are no semantic shifts in direction (see Pfister 1977: 183), for example page 11:

> LADY: The house maintains the man through the storms of the heavens and through those of life.
> LORD: It is body and soul.
> LADY: It is the human being's first world. As it has been said many a time – our house is our primary universe.
> LORD: I pass through an empty house and I name it a stage, for you are watching me.

However, under a rather monological dialogue, the actors play all possible variations of the relationship between a man and a woman: they flirt and get hurt, they approach each other and avoid each other, they argue, impose themselves, are about to fight and make up, etc. Dialogue is getting filled with psychological meanings that are given by neither the verbal text nor its subtexts; it is being created by acting techniques.

The psychological implications that are inserted in dialogue are oftentimes re-coded to the sign language of elitist arts; thus the aesthetisation strategy starts working. It is motivated by the theatrical disposition of Lord and Lady: they are "performing" to each other, they are playing a refined love game. (Yet the actors are aware of the audience, the addressee.) Bachelard's text is performed in accordance with various genre and style conventions: as an operatic recitative, a folk song, there are tragic-dramatic and melodramatic intonations, etc, in addition to that Lady demonstrates classical ballet steps. This does not have a clear connection to text semantics either – for example, Lord imitates operatic aria to laud a simple lamp. On this level, the task of the contrabass girl is to supplement beautiful classical music to general pleasure derived from art, at the same time it also enriches the acoustic score. The sounds, voice rhythms, changes in tone, the songs create music of voices that has an independent aesthetic-emotional effect.

Written text, (dialogued philosophical essay) includes barely any prescriptions regarding its theatrical realisation. Director, who in this case is also the author of the text, realises his creative intentions mainly through theatrical strategies and in full co-operation with actors, using the text as a means. On the one hand, the verbal text is being manipulated in order to create traditional dramatic structures (relationships between characters, conflicts, plot), on the other hand, the purely musical, aesthetic qualities of the dialogue are being emphasised. One can note the interplay of textuality and performativity and eventually, the first still reigns over the second. *Vaimude tund* works on the tension brought on by the opposition between the non-dramatic text and the conventions of dramatic theatre by bringing these conventions into light and allowing the spectator to be aware of them and to reflect upon them.

The theatrical context of *Siil ehk Mis on maailma nimi* (2003) is different. Unt staged it as a visitor in small Von Krahl Theatre, which was established in 1992 as a first private theatre in newly independent Estonia, and made itself a name as an avant-garde and alternative theatre. Unt wrote *Stiil* specifically to Von Krahl Theatre. Theatrical prerequisites were a black box type stage and a troupe consisting of five actors which is eager to experiment and has a considerable international stage experience. The starting idea originates from the work *Exercises in Style* (orig. *Exercices de style*, 1947) of French writer Raymond Queneau, the later member of OULIPO[3]. Queneau tells one ordinary episode in 99 different style registers; 39 of those have been translated into Estonian (1995, magazine *Vikerkaar*). As the base text, Unt chose Peet Vallak's short story "Country Woman", which is well known by Estonian audiences since it is a part of mandatory school literature. Its content is short: an elderly woman buys ink from a village shop, asks the shopkeeper if the ink is any good, considers for a long time what to right to test the ink, until she has the idea to write: a big threshing barn oven. The play does not perform the whole text, but it has been printed on the playbill. Style variations are mainly taken from Queneau's "catalogue" (for example: Prognoses; Hesitations; Logical Analysis, etc), some have been invented (Impersonal; Well, that is, etc), quotes from other texts have been added as well – in all, 43 scenes. Three male and two female actors who play them, are identified as actors and they communicate by using their real names – Liina (Vahtrik), Tiina (Tauraite), Erki (Laur), Juhan (Ulfsak), Taavi (Eelmaa). "... the next directors can give them their own New Names," writes Unt in introduction of the play. Actors do not become fictional characters. During the course of the performance, they put forward a number of different characters, but their main character is the Actor, marked by their real names – they play the roles of themselves. All of them were the same neutral black overalls, as if the work clothes of the actor, and speak pre-written text as themselves as actors; sometimes there is room for improvisation as well. For example they discuss:

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[3] OULIPO (*Ouvroir de littérature potentielle – Workshop of potential literature*) was established in 1960.

> LIINA: … but this number range was not theatrical.
> TAAVI: In some ways, everything is theatrical.
> TIINA: Let's not be banal.
> LIINA: The only way to avoid banality is to choose one specific role, the only one that you will give yourself over to, truly and psychologically. /---/ Otherwise we'll never find out the Name of the world and God. (P 14)

The quoted paragraph manifests two levels that do not exist in Queneau's model: firstly, the actors comment on different styles; secondly, according to performers the reason for these exercises in style is to "find out the name of the world", that is to reach the transcendent signified. I will analyse them more thoroughly, starting with the last one.

The second part of play's title is epistemologically fundamental question … *What is the Name of the World.* Actors get to this question in a scene called "Discussion", which imitates text analysis in the reading rehearsal of a new play. When analysing the text, the actors interpret elderly woman's hesitation (what to write?) metaphysically – the woman searches for the "Word as such", wants to "give the Name for Everything" (note the caps that suggest pathos). Thus, the phrase "big threshing barn oven" should express the very essence of the world. At the same time this phrase is shady enough to give reason for style games in order to find its significance or metaphysical truth. On the other hand, this phrase motivates the use of literary quotes with oven motifs. Among them are for example the Bible, Book of Daniel ("Three men in the furnace"), the fairytale of Hans and Grete, a fragment from Peter Weiss's *The Investigation* ("The song of burning furnaces") and the play is concluded by Juhan Viiding's poem about a child in midsummer, which last verse "behind his back a fireplace with its gaping mouth" is repeated by all the actors. Although fire as the ambivalent archetype appears in, the actors do not validate it as the "name of the world", but restrain themselves to playful hints. So the transcendent signifier as the objective will not be achieved and instead, the emphasis falls on the process of searching the meaning. At the beginning of the play, the relation between the style and the content (message) is discussed a bit ironically as follows:

TAAVI: What does it depend on, that Name of the world and god?
TIINA: Style!
JUHAN: What style?
ERKI: Our style!
/---/
LIINA: Style first, world second.
TAAVI: The world as well as the style carries a meaning. (P 6)

In the end the topic of style is broached again. As typical to Unt, a bundle of contradictory quotes about style is presented (Pascal, Flaubert, Swift et al), which eventually leaves the relation between style and content open. *Style* is a play that does not answer the questions it raises.

While Queneau's book starts with a neutral text, titled "Notes", the opening act of Unt's play is called "A Realistic Little Chamber Play", where the dialogue between the shopkeeper and the woman from the short story is presented verbatim. Actors speak with a regular intonation and present it as an unfamiliar text that has yet to be felt. Neutral speech and static postures are used in the final scene as well (Viiding's poem), but at the meantime, the actors experiment with different styles (at times alone, at times with the group) and comment critically on their theatrical efficacy, their suitability to the nature of themselves or their companions, etc. In Unt's play, the linguistic alterations are tangled with the modifications of paraverbal signs and body language, and thus the production demonstrates different acting techniques and styles as well. The verbal text is also submitted to that objective, same as any other elements of theatrical language. For example, in a scene titled "Modernly", an actor gives a vast sentence in a monotonous tone and while standing on one's head; in "Dream", the trance state is being imitated; in "Forecasts", the actors perform Grotowskian exercises on the floor. The scenes are played realistically and ritualistically, intellectually and ecstatically, rapping and imitating musicals, etc. Lighting and music are creating appropriate atmospheres, which are bound to change quickly. The whole performance is carried by actors' disposition that could be called a performative gesture: self-aware exhibition, with

the emphasis on one's skills and professional abilities. One critic called *Style* a perfect show-off for the actors of Von Krahl Theatre, where they can present themselves as actors (not characters) with as many varying devices as possible (Luuk 2004: 36). Accentuating the performance results in intentional (over)emphasising of style characteristics that give a whole venture a parodic tinge. Clearly parodical for example, is the scene titled "Philosophically", starting as follows:

> Nevertheless, we must ask with Martin Heidegger: why is this ink overall existent than rather not anything (*Nichts*)? /---/ The shop (*der Laden*) in itself does not reflect nor depict anything. Shop shops… etc. (P 24)

One must specify that foremost, this scene parodies the particular linguistic style of Estonian translations of Heidegger's work. The fact that this text is recited by male actors, naked from waist-up, and heavy metal on the background, gives a threatening tinge to this philosophical text and prepares for the next scene: a fragment from Peter Weiss's *The Investigation*.

The location of the audience (people surround the stage from three sides) and a relatively small room stimulate the communication between the actors and the spectators. In the scene "Hesitations" the personal communication technique is used. While giving a monologue, actor addresses the audience, looks a spectator from a first row long time in the eye and pauses, as if expecting an answer to a previous question (for example: "It seems that there was something big they were talking about…. An elephant?"). At this moment, both parties stand on the border of real and playing space, physically and also psychologically. "If Juhan Ulfsak views the viewer and the viewer won't turn away either, but views the actor viewing instead, then who really views the viewer and who is the viewer when he/she views the actor?" asked the critics and reached the conclusion that both play the parts of themselves — of the actor and of the viewer —, whereas the viewer, who watches back, that is, plays the part designated to the viewer, upholds the part of the actor (Põdersoo; Pilv 2004: 135). The relation of showing – viewing is important in the play itself as well: the actors act as viewers to each

other, watching and evaluating the performance of the companions. All the activities are deliberately performed for strangers' eyes and thus they work as aware and acknowledged theatrical actions.

Stage activities are not shown as a representation of a fictional story, but a play, where the short story itself is used as a plaything that achieves new meanings, different from the original ones, all depending on frameworks that the actors lay out during the performance. Declared objective – to find the ultimate truth about the world through the means of art – contradicts the postmodern irony and the free playing with the signifiers. Theatre is not considered to be the device for depicting the world truthfully, but as a signifying machine that endlessly produces differences through repetitions and variations, and never reaches its objective. A realistic short story combined with the structure borrowed from Queneau results in a playful, post-dramatic production.

In both plays and productions that were analysed, the base text is rather freely manipulated, but their artistic dominant differs. *Vaimude tund* creates psychological and narrative coherence in a non-narrative text by using performative means, while *Stiil*, on the contrary, uses fragmentation and variations. In *Stiil* the performative function predominates, as the main focus is on the process of producing signifiers – something that can not be said for *Vaimude tund*. The characteristic that is the same for both plays is self-reflective theatricality which in *Stiil* involves the spectator as well, since the spectators are forced to acknowledge their role and position in this play. *Vaimude tund* shows the style devices of dramatic theatre; however, it is possible for the viewers to ignore that level and just to enjoy the beauty of the performance.

As for text – stage relation, one can claim that in both cases, written text does not determine the play. But does the virtual structure of the prospective production function as "generative matrix" for the written text? Indeed, the (virtual) production or the director's vision, influenced by particular space, particular actors, and theatrical ideas, preceded the written text. On the other hand, the co-operation with actors and because director's plans and visions became clearer, changed the text during the rehearsals. Consequently the answer to the question above ought to be "no". Text and play can

not be considered as a binary opposition, also, neither of them is "the repository of authorial truth", for the intentions of text's author and the director are indistinguishably intertwined.

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The Role of Nature in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *King Lear* and Słowacki's *Balladyna*

ANDRZEJ CIROCKI

A very important element of Shakespeare's and Romantic poets' vision of the world was nature. They ceased to perceive it as a well-arranged and controlled mechanism and treated it as a mysterious, soulful and live formation. They did endeavour to discover the soul of nature.

According to Henry Spencer, Shakespeare and later Romantic poets particularly admired a characteristic feature of nature, namely its constant ability to revive (Spencer 1987: 66–67). Moreover, this ability enhanced the wonderful and spiritual character of wildlife and at the same time it justified the Romantic faith in characters' revival. They rejected all the geocentric theories about nature and at the same time they formed their own idea of cosmos which constituted one great living organism. Man, however, was one element of the cosmos. Such a concept of nature stamped out all the divisions into a living and still nature. Man, being an element of nature, was also a specific picture of the universe. The universe was thought to have been a network or a system of spiritual relations which made all the other phenomena arrange themselves in a consistent whole.

As A. Maciejewski notes, Shakespeare and his descendants showed a conviction that man invariably used to remain under the influence of supernatural creatures which were responsible for arranging the invisible network of cause and effect. Only when one was able to show the system of invisible relations between "the world of things" and "the world of spirit" (Maciejewski 1967: 222–223), would one comprehend the true principle of the cosmic order.

Men's relationship with the living and universal whole was established by means of subconsciousness, imagination and feelings. Therefore, reaching one's mind and one's own soul equalled winning the soul of nature. And vice versa, the knowledge of nature and good relations with it led to a clear understanding of one's *ego*.

Romantic references to nature and its interpretations were characterised by a large diversity. Assuming the primitiveness of nature, Shakespeare and first of all Romantic poets tended to create happy and perfect visions peopled with nymphs, elves, apparitions and witches who remained in stark contrast to the artificial world of human history and civilisation. Such an Arcadian nature was supposed to be a place of man's escape in which he could retrieve himself. Others, however, realised that this ideal of nature was only apparent. Nature, similarly to the human world, was branded with death, as well. Such perception of nature guided some men of letters to create a tragic concept of man's fate who could find support neither in the social world nor in nature.

As M. Inglot puts it, nature around Gopło (*Balladyna*) takes the form of wilderness and a garden (Inglot 1984: 27). Beautiful flowers and swallows live in the garden whereas sweet raspberries grow in the forest. The readers admire descriptions of blossoming flowers in Filon's, Goplana's and Alina's lines. Alina's mother also wears a dress in "pale flowers" (B: 83)[1]. Hermit compares his children to "roses" (B: 15) and Kirkor talks about girls as of "roses and lilies" (B: 14). Having met the two sisters, Kirkor exclaims "You foretold truly, old hermit. Where, beneath the thatch, from behind the panes, two roses glisten ..." (B: 39).

The flowery atmosphere resembles the Arcadian space, which is present in Shakespeare's works, as well. According to M. Adamczyk, Arcadia used to be a primeval and happy land believed to have been a kingdom of peace, order and eternal spring. It was inhabited by simple shepherds who lived in harmony with nature (Adamczyk 1993: 70). Thus, the descriptions of nature in *Balladyna* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* make the reader think of Eden or the ancient times of Peloponnese. For instance, the swallow, a typical folk motif, is present from the first to the fifth act and constitutes the

[1] Page references to Słowacki's *Balladyna* (2003).

main layer of theatrical space. The swallow, which symbolises harmony, calmness, honesty and concordance with nature, leads Kirkor to the Widow's house. However, swallows do behave anxiously when Balladyna appears in their vicinity: "See, my lord, her very sign. See yonder swallow, dark and shining. See, instead of flying, how it hides itself there beneath the thatch? Just sits there in silence" (B: 64). Consequently, there is an intimate relationship between simple and honest people and a swallow – which is broken in the case of malicious and cruel people. Accordingly, there are a lot of swallows around Alina: "Why is it that the swallows are attracted to your younger daughter?" (B: 65). The reader encounters a similar situation in the case of Goplana:

> Of neither ... What you see on the witch's brow
> Are swallows, bound by a spell of enchantment.
> So have they been since the morning in autumn
> When they fell in the depths of the streamlet.
> The stream wove them into a garland,
> A garland ebony-black,
> And cast them up in a wreath for Goplana's bright tresses.
> (B: 24)

A friendly and merciful person keeps a harmonious relationship with nature. However, the relationship is broken by people who act against it and its laws. Hence, the Widow who is chased away by Balladyna compares her fate to the old swallows' fate which are condemned to death by the young ones. She did not believe this story some time ago but her unhappiness tells her to look at nature from a different point of view. Consequently, she becomes aware of a biological fight for survival in it. Similarly, as W. Weintraub notes, King Lear, who calls his cruel and heartless daughters "those pelican daughters" (KL: 83)[2] is chased away by them (Weintraub 1977: 210). He moves from one place to another, unable to find a place where he could peacefully spend his old age. When he wanders and complains about injustice which governs the world, Shakespeare stresses his depression, fury

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[2] Page references to Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1994).

and bitterness, using numerous descriptions of nature. Thus, Lear's fury is highlighted in the following words:

> Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! rage!
> You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
> Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
> You sulphurous and thought – executing fires,
> Vaunt- couriers of oak – cleaving thunderbolts,
> Singe my white head! And thou, all – shaking thunder,
> Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
> Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
> That make ingrateful man!
>
> (KL: 77)

According to W. Kopaliński, the reader can compare the symbols of a swallow with the one of a pelican. Both of them carry a large number of meanings and one of them is that of infidelity and greediness (Kopaliński 1990: 306–307). As it can be seen, both symbols refer to Balladyna and the two daughters of King Lear who are deprived of love, friendship, respect and faith. They measure everything in terms of money and wealth. In this way, they resemble pelicans or swallows, which tend to be greedy, mean and unscrupulous. Being powerful, wealthy and domineering is more important for Balladyna, Regan and Goneril than the life of their friends, relatives and even parents. However, there is one more aspect which seems to be much more convincing than the first one. Pelicans symbolise parenthood, great love of parents towards their children and readiness to do everything in order to save their children's lives when they are in danger. They are even able to sacrifice their blood for them. When King Lear calls Goneril and Regan "those pelican daughters" (KL: 83) he twists the meaning of the whole symbol. They peck their parent prey in cold blood. The two daughters do not show any respect towards their father. They are evil, greedy and heartless. Moreover, they condemn their father to wandering and drive him crazy.

As F. Mahon observes, the world of nature also threatens, especially when cruel deeds are committed (Mahon 1961: 46–52). They are reflected in the sudden appearance of a dense fog over the

surface of the lakes or the blowing of dreadful gales or the roaring of rough lakes. Tall trees, with a brisk wind among their boughs make their leaves rock and roar in something that is at once exultation and agony. The wind tugs at the trees as if it might pluck them root and all out of the earth like tufts of grass. Thus, when man acts against nature it appears to be a powerful force which can change the existing order of the world and it can change the sense of man's life and bring him to ruin.

When man acts against nature, he is usually under the influence of evil powers or their servants such as Weird Sisters, apparitions or ghosts. All these creatures evoke the atmosphere of threat in the selected works and whenever they appear to ordinary mortals to tempt them with their clever prophecies, nature turns out to be a great, powerful and sinister force.

Picture 1. *Macbeth and his future.* Painted by George Craig.

For instance, in *Macbeth*, the Weird Sisters appear "in thunder, lightning and in rain" (M: 25)[3]. Accordingly, nature seems to identify itself with the characters and their inner experiences of the tragedies concerned. Therefore, before the inhabitants of the immaterial world come to inflict harm, they always opt for a place which could be suitable for their wicked deeds. It could be forlorn ruins of a medieval castle grown over with ivy, situated preferably in an isolated place, in the wild woods or on a high cliff by a stormy sea. The place they seek for their meetings is just as dismal, dreadful and terrifying as their feats.

As H. Zbierski observes, the problem of existence of all the fantasy characters like ghosts and Weird Sisters springs from a philosophical movement known as Neoplatonism (Zbierski 1982: 351–389). According to this philosophy, man lives on the boundary between the material and immaterial world. There is some kind of existence in the immaterial world, on top of which there is a strange being who, by means of its servants, namely ghosts and Weird Sisters, can contact and communicate with the inhabitants of the material world. Thus, studying Shakespeare's and Słowacki's works, the reader has an opportunity to get to know various apparitions and witches who come in order to delude man with their promises and then bring him to ruin. All the mysterious creatures constitute an invisible part of the world of nature. All of them confirm the wealth of popular beliefs and superstitions in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Furthermore, while the evil deeds are being performed, the characters happen to hear "Paddock's call" (M: 25), "an owl's shrieks" (M: 46), sinister thunders, blowings of dreadful gales or roarings of rough lakes. As it can be seen, nature appears to be able to intensify the feelings of threat, fear and uncertainty. Since the themes of the tragedies discussed in the article are those of savage passions, gross appetites, brutalities of lust, treason, poisonings and violence, nature forming the setting for the action of these tragedies is used to evoke proper feelings. For instance, the imagery of the selected tragedies shocks, moves and fills the readers with indignation but it seems to have fulfilled its aim: it has not left anyone indifferent about the picture of the represented world. Let me

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[3] Page references to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1994).

illustrate it with examples of the imagery which can be shocking, moving and revolting. For instance, in *King Lear:*

> Alas, sir! Are you here? Things that love night,
> Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
> Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
> And make them keep their caves. Since I was man,
> Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
> Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
> Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry
> Th' affliction, nor the fear.
>
> (KL: 78)

or in *Balladyna*:

> The very wind races after me to ask where my sister is..
> I answer: slain, slain.
> The trees cry out: Where is you sister?
> I try to wash away the stain.
> From the azure water of the spring, her face stared back
> At me, pale and still.
> Oh, where has she vanished? You weeping willow,
> Standing there lone, where I ...sister mine...alive!
>
> (B: 61)

and finally in *Macbeth*:

> The raven is hoarse,
> That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
> Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
> That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
> And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
> Of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood,
> Stop up th' access and passage to remorse;
> That no compunctious visitings of nature
> Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
> Th' effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
> And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
> Wherever in your sightless substances
> You wait on nayure's mischief! Come, thick night,
> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,

That my keen knife see not the wound it makes.
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, "Hold, hold!"

(M: 37)

All the tragedies consist of many descriptions of weather conditions. The reader observes that certain emotional states of the characters are always accompanied by diverse weather conditions. For instance, when King Lear suffers from a nervous breakdown and madness his frame of mind is stressed by a raging storm and a pouring rain.

The dependence between the character's situation and the role of nature is observed in the scene of picking raspberries. For Alina, the pitcher for raspberries constitutes a kind of a colourful mosaic. There are a lot of fragrant flowers which tempt the girl with their scent and colour. The raspberries are pink and very sweet. The scene is a pastoral one, for the beautiful violets grow amid the raspberries, which never happens in reality. Balladyna also went to the forest to pick raspberries but she is not so lucky as her sister. She walks along paths lacking flowers, birds and bright colours; nature is gloomy and as dark as her character. All the flowers and bright colours have been substituted by blueberries and hissing snakes. The main colour of both scenes is the red colour of the raspberries and the setting sun. Balladyna, however, compares red to blood.

The perception of the two sceneries pertaining to picking raspberries and their mutual rearrangement seems to go back to the story of Lost Paradise. Goplana, however, appears to be a wayward ruler of nature. It is she who transforms Grabiec into a willow and this change becomes a source of many grotesque vicissitudes. For instance, the twig which Filon breaks later serves as a pillow for Alina and simultaneously becomes a sceptre on which Chochlik will play a tune about the crime:

Come you, my Minister of State, take this sceptre of mine,
Made of a willow branch, and use it for a pipe.
Finger the openings lightly, and with swift touch.
Think up some tune to play, to make these subjects here
Forget their troubles and be gay.
Use your stupid head to some good purpose, you,

And play a cheerful tune for us!
You down there, listen, and don't make any noise!
Play, my Minister.

(B: 118)

The wound which remains in the tree after the twig secretes vodka and tempts Grabiec and becomes the main cause of his death. Goplana leads Kirkor to the Widow's house and makes him fall in love with Alina and Balladyna. Moreover, Goplana unnecessarily reminds the Widow of the song of raspberries. Skierka, however, realises what the end of the rivalry can be like "Count on the black heart of Balladyna. Jealousy, if ever I saw it, was in that little bit of fire, Jealousy, and a lot more ..." (B: 49). But Goplana does want to get rid of her rival and simply does nothing to avert the crime.

The crime breaks the harmony which reigns in nature and simultaneously produces the punishing power which is its part, too. Accordingly, the reader becomes familiar with another role of nature, namely its ability to administer punishment for all the deeds done against it. As a result, Goplana changes into a confessor and Balladyna's judge. She says "but Nature, outraged by your crime, will avenge itself. Go to the hut." (B: 63)

Similarly, in *Macbeth*, when the eponymous character commits crimes which, following McMorrow are defined "as against the use of nature", the harmony in the world becomes violated (McMorrow 2000: 35). The appearance of this disharmony is reflected in the owl's shrieks and cricket's cry when Macbeth killed his king. All these strange sounds stand for a kind of response from nature which has just been hurt and violated. Another factor which confirms the violation of natural laws is the movement of Birnam Wood, which, according to the Weird Sisters' prophecies, was to come up to Macbeth's castle in Dunsinane. In addition, Macduff, the real foe Macbeth could fear, was born prematurely, which means that he was taken out of his mother's womb earlier than nature allowed for it. There are numerous arguments which prove that disharmony also appears in nature. However, the characters who cause the harmony to be broken, undergo hallucinations and their madness and abnormal behaviour make them members of a completely new dimension of existence.

The crimes which have been committed in the selected works break the harmony which reigns in nature. As a result of this, nature immediately administers punishment which is its part, too. Here, however, the punishment takes the form of an incalculable suffering full of hallucinations, qualms of conscience, sleeplessness and emotional burden. In spite of the fact that Macbeth finally finds the cause of his inner fears, the suffering does not lessen. It will be present till the end of his days since once the laws of nature have been violated, it is impossible to restore the order in the world. Thus, those who dare to tempt fate should be ready to take the punishment which sooner or later will certainly come.

Nature in Shakespeare's and Słowacki's works takes the form of a certain setting which seized visually and musically creates a very riveting reality. However, it is a different kind of authenticity where the relationships between people and nature are completely different. The areas around Gopło (*Balladyna*) and Inverness, Forres (*Macbeth*) do not constitute a strange and unusual world which has to be acquainted with and appreciated. All the characters feel as if they belonged to these areas. However, the characters' feelings and mind seem to be a real mystery. Both the feelings and minds are expressed by the "familiar" wildlife (Macmorrow 2000: 65). Thus, Słowacki and Shakespeare allow particular elements of the surrounding nature to pass through the feelings which have already been experienced so as to create an emotionally interpreted poetic structure. This process is based on a proper selection of landscape elements and animisation of inanimate objects such as plants and animals. For instance, in *Balladyna,* the reader has a chance to see a willow which is able to talk. The willow becomes a witness of various events and sees Balladyna kill her sister. Seeing this, the willow cries out "Jesus Mary" (B: 57). This allows the landscape to be replete with certain emotional atmosphere. The following descriptions of landscape will serve as examples:

Alina's perspective:

> Ah, what lots of raspberries! And all so rosy red!
> All crystalline, too, with the pearly dew.
> Rosy red are Kirkor's lips, like these berries!
> Fresh violets are all about, but they shed their perfume in vain,

> For I've no time for picking violets.
> I must hurry. My sister will fill her jug first,
> And return from the forest, and capture a husband.
> Even, my dear little violets, if you were roses of purest gold,
> 'Twould be the raspberries I'd pluck.
>
> (B: 52)

Balladyna's perspective:

> How few there are here! How few berries, and what there are all bloody red.
> How few! Which way to go to find the most, I don't know.
> Why, Oh Sun, do you rise so bloodily?
> Better darkness than dawn, or than such a dawn as this.
> And where is my sister? She must have taken the path to the right,
> And have filled her pitcher,
> While I go wandering about like a soul misled by horrible despair,
> Mingling my tears with the dew.
>
> (B: 53)

Elements from which these two landscapes have been built are mostly identical: forest, rustle of leaves, fragrance of flowers and raspberries. However, the same landscape has been presented here from two different perspectives. In the first one, the situation has acquired the form of a happy pastoral scene with the green forest, beautiful flowers, chattering birds and sweet raspberries. The whole scene seems to be a happy paradise where everything is harmonious and primeval. But when the idea of murder crosses Balladyna's mind, the same landscape becomes overwhelmed with the atmosphere of death and funeral. Accordingly, nature is responsible for arousing feelings of bliss, happiness, threat or fear subject to what kind of atmosphere prevails in a particular part of work.

Similarly, in *King Lear*, the eponymous character is chased away by his daughters and condemned to homelessness and wandering. While King Lear was wandering around the heath, there was a raging storm which reflected his state of mind. Therefore, the reader can say that nature relates to the character's inner experiences. For instance, King Lear's breakdown, madness and rage against the evil and injustice governing the world is reflected in the following words:

> Rumble thy bellyful! spit, fire! spout, rain!
> Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
> I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
> I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
> You owe me no subscription: then, let fall
> Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
> A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man.
> But yet I call you servile ministers,
> That will with two pernicious daughters join
> Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
> So old and white as this. O! O! 't is foul!
>
> (KL: 77–78).

The mood changes immediately and, consequently, the reader interprets the landscape differently. For instance, on the basis of such descriptions of landscapes, the reader describes all the emotional changes occurring in the characters' mind. In the first example, Alina does not express her feelings straight away; she does it by means of numerous descriptions of the landscape. Thus, the landscape appears here in order to coincide with the development of emotions but also in order to be their perfect resonator. This is a typical way of informing the reader about the characters' inner states. The characters do avoid revealing their own feelings, for the world of nature becomes the absolute expression of their rich personalities. In such reality there is an unusual unity between man and the surrounding nature. Nature and man become a great coexistent romantic unity whereas all the physical and spiritual occurrences lose their distinct characters.

Sometimes, however, the relations between the characters and the world of nature are differently arranged. Characters' utterances do not form the setting and quite the contrary, the characters report what they perceive with their eyes, namely

> The very wind races after me to ask where my sister is ...
> I answer: slain, slain.
> The trees cry out: Where is your sister?
> I tried to wash away the stain.

From the azure water of the spring, her face stared back
at me, pale and still.
Oh, where has she vanished? You weeping willow,
Standing there lone, where I ... sister mine ... alive!

(B: 61)

Or

Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!

(KL: 77)

Shakespeare's and Słowacki's landscapes are not monotonous and static. They constantly change and resemble a colourful fairy-like scenery which astonishes the reader by the rearrangement of vistas, shapes, colours, moods and finally evokes inner disturbances and rapture in the reader. Observing the sceneries during the day and at night, in the rain and in the sun Shakespeare and Słowacki endeavoured to grasp the unique essence of nature – and thanks to a certain poetic construction they tried to evoke some emotional states in the readers.

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"Literature in a Bottle": The Reception of Paul Celan and Jizchak Katzenelson in Korea

CHON YOUNG-AE

> "Differences in a nation may be modified by the views and understandings of the other nations [...] Not that all nations must think alike, but that they should recognize and understand one another. And if they would learn to tolerate one another, even if they could not love one another [...] the occasion of unnecessary fights would be gradually lessened, wars would be less horrified and victory would be less proud."[1]

> "National literature is now rather an unmeaning term; the epoch of world literature is at hand and everyone must strive to hasten its approach."[2]

Goethe´s concept of *Weltliteratur* which provides a headline for our field was essentially a kind of pacifism. However, looking back over the twentieth century, where international contacts have increased on an unprecedented scale, these contacts have not produced such a pacific idea. The twentieth century is stained by wars of terrible violence. Confronting the past and the present, trying to find a means mastering history through language became significant themes in literature. However, does literary language yet possess this power? Global capitalism accelerates not only production, but also waste and

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[1] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Werke. Hamburger Ausgabe* (München: C. H. Beck´sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1981), vol. 12, p. 323.

[2] Ibid., p. 322.

the deterioration of its products. Language cannot free itself from this mechanism. Words now have a far shorter shelf-life. What is the remaining power of language?

Another striking feature of the last century was the rapidly changing living conditions that brought about changes in the ontological paradigm. The most salient problem dealt with in literature was that of *Ortlosigkeit*, rootlessness, geographical as well as existential. A vast number of victims and idlers emerged all over the world. They came from the battle lines – forced to leave their hometowns in the aftermaths of all manner of wars. They also left the countryside and became urban idlers. On the other side, human beings began not only to enjoy their newfound mobility, a benefit of industrialization, but increasingly the escape from one´s pressing living condition has taken on the literal form of re-location; even the voluntary abandonment of one´s hometown has become a pattern of life. Lost identities and rootlessnes caused by many diverse events assumed urgency during the twentieth century. Literature reminds us, most of all, of the human condition.

"Message in a Bottel": (from) The Borders of Silence

A site on which issues and human existence clashed most fiercely in the twentieth century was perhaps Auschwitz. It was an event in the history of humankind in which human impotence, through systematically expressed violence, reached its climax. It is a gruesome old German story. But violence has been repeated unceasingly in the world on large and small scales and "Auschwitz" is frequently taken as a metaphor of the inexorability of violence.

Among the poems since Auschwitz, Paul Celan´s poems are read more than any others in the context of history. This is not limited to "*Todesfuge*", "the poem after Auschwitz". All the poems in Celan´s 8 volume poetry collection are branded with historical wounds. Celan himself says indirectly: "The twentieth of january", the day of ´final solution´, the nazi regime decided to murder Jews

undifferentially, is "inscribed on each poem".[3] Each word is soaked in history, but it does not obviously reveal itself. His poetry displays memory (*Erinnerung*) through longterm interiorization (*Erinnerung*) and the depth of pure suffering.

In Celan´s works the main features of German literature since 1945 are concentrated: mastering of the past, hermetic lyric, language skepticism, etc. He converged the intense awareness of reality with literary traits on a high level; his unique poetic condensation and his deep skepticism of language add weight to the poems. It makes us above all reflect seriously and fundamentally upon the past and the human condition.

> Und duldest du, Mutter, wie einst, ach daheim,
> den leisen, den deutschen, den schmerzlichen Reim?
> ("Nähe der Gräber")
> Can you bear, Mother, as at home, oh, once on a time
> The gentle, the German, the pain-laden rhyme?
> ("Nearness of Graves")[4]

The simple and urgent question raised by Paul Celan here in one of his early poems, is the undertone of his work. Celan´s native language is German, but he never lived in Germany. To Celan who fortunately survived the holocaust, – Born in Bukowina, a border area between Russia and Romania, Celan lived in Paris until his death in Seine – German was the *Mördersprache,* murderers' language, but at the same time it was his "mother language", *Muttersprache* – The native tongue and the literary language in which, before such tragic events, he enjoyed reading with his mother. His language with such complex meanings and his several names – Paul Antschel, Paul Ancel, Paul Celan – clearly reveal the rootless identity of Paul Celan.

Questions similar to that above in "Nähe der Gräber" and their seemingly ordinary suggestion nagged at Celan incessantly and would have closed any mouth from speaking. This situation is depicted as a

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[3] Paul Celan, *Gesammelte Werke in fünf Bänden* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1983), vol. 3, p. 196.

[4] Translated by John Felstiner. John Felstiner, *Paul Celan, Poet, Survivor, Jew*, (New Haven: Yale University Press), p. 24.

closed mouth that is completely filled with "grass of darkness" up to the roof: "In der Mundhöhe Finstergewächs" (II, 16) In his late career, Celan´s poetic dictions were condensed in such incommunicable ciphers that it finally reached the state of silence. Nevertheless his poems carried unprecedented intense energy. One of Celan´s later poems, "Ein Blatt" clearly summarizes a desperate situation in which only a single leaf survives on a "treeless" tree. A tree, a blossoming tree has been in the traditional lyric a symbol for poetry.

EIN BLATT, baumlos
Für Bertolt Brecht:

Was sind das für Zeiten,
wo ein Gespräch
beinah ein Verbrechen ist,
weil es soviel Gesagtes
mit einschließt? (II, 385[5])

A Leaf, treeless
For Bertolt Brecht

What times are these
When a conversation
Is almost a crime
Because it includes
So much already said?

The conversation about the tree includes here not only "silence about the crime" as said by Bertolt Brecht, but also "so much already said". The very act of a conversation is defined in the poem as "almost a crime" – a complete skepticism about conversation and language as a whole. The fate of his language to eventually reach the state of silence was clear from the question at the beginning of Celan´s poetic career. The following poem sounds almost like a last question reflecting back on his entire life and includes nothing but the same urgent resounding echo.

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[5] Paul Celan, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 385.

DIE NACHZUSTOTTERNDE WELT,
bei der ich zu Gast
gewesen sein werde, ein Name,
herabgeschwitzt von der Mauer,
an der eine Wunde hochleckt. (II, 349)

THE WORLD TO BE COPIED IN STAMMERS,
In which I will have been a guest,
A name,
Rolled down in sweat on a wall
On which a wound is licking its way up

From a world that is expressed as a "wall" Celan reveals a life in which he can barely speak, other than with the words "sweat" and "a name". There on the wall a "wound" – as on an execution wall – threateningly spreads. The word "name" resounds throughout Celan´s writing, restoring identity to those despoiled of it. Here it stands for the very life of the poet himself who goes with his very being to language. The reader cannot tear his/her eyes away from this scarce existence which threatens to be erased, to turn into a fiction. Through a very abstract image a painful life and its painful conditions become vivid – The painful search for its meaning and the painful attempt to describe it as well. The poem indicates furthermore something beyond it. Something which exists beyond the language. Despite its lack we think about its overwhelming existence and meaning. Thank to this "stammer", to the poetic words are driven to the limit of speakability.

Celan, who wrote poem after poem with such devotion refers to literature as a "*Flaschenpost*" – a message in a bottle, "sent out in the – not always greatly hopeful – belief that somewhere and sometime it could wash up on land, a heartland perhaps."[6] This recalls the essence of literature as the fruit of acute solitude. However, it also includes the dialogue characteristic of literature – a poetic of dialogue which is forlorn, and yet cannot be surrendered.

Such a difficultly transmitted language as Celan´s expands literature. He is Europe´s most significant postwar poet. Condensed poetic dictions, such as Celan´s poetry, can hardly be widely read. If

[6] Paul Celan, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 186.

Celan´s trace can nevertheless be found at the other end of earth, where his poetry encounters similar historical wounds, it shows that his strange and distant poems have reached – like a "message in a bottle" – the coast of a *Herzland*, "heartland" as "a coming word in the heart."[7] That may be evidence that the energy of poetic language can yet be discovered. Such evidence may also be traced from a Korean poet, KI Hyungdo, whose youth and short life spans the era of radical politization of Korean society in the1980s. This era began with a massacre in a small city by a military junta, which sparked civil registance. Ki catalogues the turbulence of the years when violent demonstration was daily work in his "College Years":

Under the wooden bench lay a heap of books deserted.
The woods of silver beech were thick and beautiful
There even the leaves became weapons
Arriving at the beautiful forest young peaple, as if prepared,
Closed their eyes before passing through. On the stone steps
I read Plato. Each time I heard gunshots.
With each approaching magnolia season, my friends scattered into prisons and to the army.
A poetry-writing junior revealed himself as an agent.
There was a professor that I respected, although he guarded his silence as was his nature.
After a few winters, I became a complete loner.
As graduation approached, leaving school became a great fear.

With a very low tone Ki writes about conflicts in the days when even "the leaves became weapons." This appears contrary to the loud tone found in Brecht´s poems. Brecht´s conflict between "enthusiasm about the blossoming apple tree" and "horror at a painter´s [Hitler´s] speech" in "Schlechte Zeit für die Lyrik" concludes with a declaration in which this very horrer "drives me [Brecht] to the desk." Closing eyes blinding themselves to the vital developing attractive young leaves and passing through the forest, and a calm reflection of fear in reading Plato on the stone steps are expressed in the poem. In addition, the fate of one generation appears in a condensed scene by juxtaposing an image of a junior who became an

[7] Celan signed Heidegger's guest book with this phrase.

agent and a professor who usually guarded his silence and couldn't do anything more. – This low tone causes an echo in the mind of all Korean readers who have experienced these dark times, lets them reexamine their past days mournfully.

In the horrified and desolate voice of Ki´s poem, "A Black Leaf in the Mouth", there is no place for the echo of lyric. "A Black Leaf in the Mouth" is at the same time the title of the whole book. Only an oppressive feeling of "sticking with tenacity" and "a black leaf in the mouth" are delivered. In "A Black Leaf in the Mouth", though the type of poem is different, Paul Celan´s condensed phrases of poetic diction such as, *Ein Blatt, baumlos*, *Finsternisgewächs*, and *Schwarze Milch der Frühe* can be recalled. Such a similarity is supported by the fact that the two poetry anthologies of Paul Celan which had just been translated into Korean (1985), and an academic book on Paul Celan (1986) were on the reading list for poets in the 1980s in Korea and they reached especially the poet Ki before his death (1989).

Poetic diction expressed under the oppression of dark history, which regretfully every nation knows, is frought with difficulties. Those who experience extreme agony in which he/she cannot speak tries nevertheless to be a "witness", which is often one´s last possible effort at resistance. Poetic "witness" with its purified diction and its lasting effects allows us to intensify our sensibility for the pain in the world which should not be there and must be prevented.

"Message in a Bottle": Under a Fir Tree in Vittel

We sometimes encounter such a witness – great songs that have previously been unheard of: *Großer Gesang vom ausgerotteten jüdischen Volk* (A Great Song of the Murdered Jewish Folk) by Jizhack Katzenelson (1886–1944). The process of how this book was written and came to us, is a meaningful example in terms of the argument about "memory", "translation", "power of language" or "Weltliteratur". The story of books production is without parallel. During the military uprising in a ghetto of Warsaw in 1943 Jews faced with annihilation, tried to do everything in their power to

rescue one person from a combat troop. They got him a fake passport to give him the possibility of release. The Jews who would be exchanged with an overseas German war prisoners were jailed in the camp in Vittel in South France. In other words, the Jews facing their approaching end tried to save one person who could write down their story, in that way other people could believe the unbelievable but true story and would not dismiss it out of hand. Katzenelson wrote it down during the several months of his imprisonment in Vittel before his fake passport was discovered. He was then transported to Auschwitz directly into a gas chamber. Katzenelson wrote 15 cantos of 15 four-line stanzas, a total of 900 stanzas, which he copied and hid. Two of the six copies – One which was sown into the lather grip of a discharged prisoner´s bag and an other which was put into a bottle, sealed and buried under a fir tree in the camp – were recovered and published in Paris in 1948 but there was no significant response by the public. After the reunification of Germany, Wolf Biermann translated the songs from Yiddish into German and published them (1994).

This document of hardships is written in rhyme. It is not be limited to "material" from one historical period. It reminds us of the diverse function of literature. It shows a genealogy of the poetic word, that is recorded in the first song: An imaginary dialogue is repeated between an absolute imperative of "*Thou, sing a song!*" and a plea of "*How can I sing?*". "*Grab... a twisted harp... sing the broken/ heart in pain*" "*A song cannot come out of a trampled throat*", "*Lift up your head and sing*" – "*How can I sing? My eyes cannot be lifted up to the sky.*" While repeating such a dialogue, the poet cries out with "*eyes that cannot be lifted up,*" with "*eyelids on which hardened tears are stuck,*" with "*the eyes which remain invisible though hardened tears are taken off the eyes,*" and with "(these) *two broken hands.*" Where can he find his loved one? "*Shout, from all the holes, under all the stones/ in the ashes, in all the flames, cry out in all the smoke*"... "*Thou who were used as feed, shout from the stomach of a fish in a pond*" "*cry out from the intestines of a wild animal*" "*let me know where I can find you*", "*I must see you*" whether in "*feed, ashes of bones, or soap.*" The first

song ends: "*Bring me a harp... then, I will sing.*" Thus the song of the "last" Jew eventually begins.

The very unique Jewish exodus, and their uprooted fate – both in itself and as it is described in such literature – strongly reminds us of the human conditions under which the awful primitive mechanism of violence is still perpetuated. "Auschwitz" will not reappear as Auschwitz as it was but it reappears in different forms since the structure of violence does not end regardless of time and place.

The reception of such a rare book like "Great Song of the Murdered Jewish Folk" is also noteworthy: I once read it by chance and translated it on the spot, in one breath; I recited the first of the songs by chance in a lecture. It came to be published in Korea because one of the audience members, a poor poet, wanted to hear the rest and to share it at all costs with other people.

"Message in a Bottle": Far, Near

In any periphery, for example those of P. Celan, I. Katzenelson and Korean readers, a countless number of rootless lives still remain, and their voices want to be heard. I acquired a book by Norman Manea accidentally and began to translate it just because his hometown was the same as Celan. In the book I encountered a little boy on a concentration camp deep in a steppe region who believed that people kept dying since they wore a sweater which had been handed down to him ("Sweater"), and also, a strange group of people who silently endure the heavy burden of their living conditions under the dictatorship of villainous Ceausescu as if they were in a silent film ("Trenchcoat"). I also met Jaan Kross, an author from Estonia, a country in the far Baltic. He told stories of the rough seashore life and of those who were forced to be deported far from the Baltic to Siberia or the Far East. Through the stories we encounter people who were left to historical violence, yet did "not stop striving to be human in the midst of perfected inhumanity." At the end of some of these stories, a Korean sometimes unexpectedly appears. ("The Story of my Cousin"[8]).

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[8] Die Geschichte meines Vetters, in Kross 1994.

Now the Aprok (Yalu) River on the border between Korea and China first appears in my sight. Once when Korea was not yet divided but under the yoke of colonization and many people were forced to leave the Korean peninsula after the independence movement of 1919. For these refugees, the Yalu was the route out of Korea, once beyond the river they would throw a parting glance at it. (The river now has the same function for the North Korean refugees.) I stare at the river with the perspective of a runaway. I read "Der Yalu fließt" (The Yalu flows) of Mirok Li. (1946). Unexpectedly I find this river "flowing" in far away Germany. The story was written in German by a refugee's hands. The first edition was published just after World War II. Its second edition came out after the death of the writer, around the time in which the small Korean peninsula was being bombarded during the Korean War. Within this calm story, we meet an intellectual quietly bearing the frustration of losing his country. And we guess how such frustration could be endured. In addition, I rummage in my bookcase to find *Dictee* written by Theresa Hak-Kyoung Cha (1951–1982), who delivered in English the same Korean history and an account of her rootless life in America in a amazingly contemporary modern narrative. In the highly aesthetic frame her family history which is marked by lost identities is reconstructed, thus recollecting the history of the continuous lines of refugees that remain as a scar. The neglected alien's consciousness in the diaspora is reflected; on the verge of such existence there can sometimes be found the bursting force of language. Most of all, I look to Anatoli Kim´s *Weiße Trauer*, (White Lament), a German-translated version of the Russian original and I listen intently to *Nachtigallenecho* (The Echo of Nightigale). Or I read stories of different Korean runaways who escaped from imperial Japan or of those who were deported under Stalin´s dictatorship to far Uzbekistan. All these people are now vivid in my mind, one by one as I read these stories of rootless lives. These images awaken a longing within me to reach for the things that are formed close to the edge and to make a room for those things in my humble writing.

Randgänge, Edge-goings

Finding and spreading good writing that goes beyond all the boundaries and gaps is above all an endeavor to expand the literary domain. This *Randgang* must not just be a *Rundgang*, a light walk around, but it should be rather a rigorous ridge climbing. Controlling oneself even on the dangerous edge of a cliff will broaden ones views and the gatherings from such walks, *Randgänge*, will lead to the exploration of a new field. This is a chapter of comparative literature, or rather a new chapter of unique literature. Our recognition of intense works from the edge will expand the borders of literature. At these boundaries literature does not lead to shallowness or dissipation due to its overload, but rather to a true expansion. From these several perspectives, we have a reason to brighten our eyes at the explosive power of clear low-toned language on the periphery.

"*Tanning its eardrum – philosophy's.*"[9] On a final note, a philosopher's edge-going in our era begins as stated above. Considering all the defenseless ears that are open to the language of the clamorous media, the advertisement of capitalism and ideologies, the eardrum of philosophy is not the only thing which needs to be tanned.

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[9] Jacques Derrida, *Randgänge der Philosophie*, trans. Peter Engelmann (Wien: Passagen Verlag, 1988), p. 13. Originaltitle: *Marges de la philosophie* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1972)

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Die Widersprüche der Gattung: Tagebuch*

MARI TARVAS

Das Tagebuch ist eine interessante, aporetische Gattung, deren Popularität, wie die vieler autobiografischer Textsorten, steigt (vgl. Roberts 2002: 63f.). Obwohl unliterarisch im eigentlichen Sinne – oder eben deswegen – ist es als Lektürestoff überaus beliebt. In den Sozialwissenschaften spricht man seit Mitte der 1990er Jahre sogar von der (auto)biografischen Wende (ib. 3) und berücksischtigt dabei auch die Diarien.

Das Tagebuch ist sehr privat und doch in manchen Fällen öffentlich. Man sieht als Leser im Diarium das Leben eines anderen Menschen so unvermittelt, aus dem Inneren heraus betrachtet, und weiß, dass es sich hier nicht um die Ganze Wahrheit handelt. Es zaubert die Atmosphäre vergangener Epochen vor unsere Augen und dokumentiert eine sehr private Sicht auf das Zeitgeschehen. Daher ist es mit Reservationen als Geschichtsquelle ernst zu nehmen. Der Leser kann hier die Wirklichkeit, das Leben, die Autobiographie eines Menschen „konsumieren". Doch es bestehen auch Diarien, die sich nicht auf die eigene Person konzentrieren, so die Tagebüchern, die etwa als Freundschaftsdienst für Freunde verfasst worden sind und deren Protagonisten diese sind (vgl. als prominentestes Beispiel Eckermann), oder aber chronikartige Notate, die das Öffentliche dokumentieren.

Trotz vieler Irritationen, die mit dieser Gattung verbunden werden und die Aufmerksamkeit auf sich ziehen könnten, steht das Tagebuch

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keinesfalls im Mittelpunkt des literaturwissenschaftlichen Interesses, ja, es ist sogar umstritten. Daher hat man der Bestimmung seiner Gattungsmerkmale und der Struktureigenschaften auch bei weitem weniger Aufmerksamkeit gewidmet, als dies etwa bei solchen, ebenso in der Prosa geschriebenen Gattungen wie dem Roman oder aber der Novelle der Fall gewesen ist (vgl. etwa die Bibliographie von Wuthenow 1990: 227ff.) In Bezug auf die Forschung der autobiographischen Texte im Generellen ist festzustellen, dass die diesbezügliche Forschung vor allem in Frankreich (man denke etwa an Le Rider 2002) sowie im anglofonen Raum größere Fortschritte gemacht hat, während die deutsche Forschung sich erst relativ spät für diese Textsorte zu interessieren begann.

Ein Grund der erst in den letzten Jahren intensiveren Forschungsdiskussion besteht hier darin, dass das Tagebuch im engeren Sinne nicht unbedingt zu der sogenannten schönen Literatur zu zählen ist, denn es handelt sich nicht primär um eine fiktionale Textsorte, die sog. schöne Literatur, sondern eher um etwas, wo auch die Faktenbezogenheit eine zentrale Rolle spielt (vgl. zu der Frage der Fiktionalität Roberts 2002: 70). Auch wenn der Übergang zu den literarischen Texten gleitend ist (man spricht etwa auch von literarischen Tagebüchern), ist das Tagebuch tendeziell bzw. dem Prototyp nach ein Gebrauchstext. Das Tagebuch, wie man sich dies im Alltag vorstellt, ist ein Text, in dem jemand über das Tagesgeschehen berichtet: ungefiltert und authentisch. Es werden die jeweils aus der Sicht des schreibenden Ichs wichtigen Ereignisse dargelegt und reflektiert. In meinem Kontext berücksichtige ich die in manchen Untersuchungen präferierte Unterscheidung zwischen den Tagebüchern als der autobiographischen Zwecksform und den literarischen Tagebüchern (vgl. Heinrich-Korpys 2003: 30) nicht, da diese für die folgend dargelegten Probleme nicht entscheidend ist.

In gewisser Hinsicht sind die Tagebücher als Grenzfälle theoretisch schwer erfassbar, da eben heterogen, aporetisch und paradox. Allen Darstellungen der Gattungsspezifik Diariums ist eine gewisse Ratlosigkeit charakteristisch. Es liegen hier, im Tagebuch, Widersprüche vor, die oft nicht lösbar sind und die nicht mit Hilfe der Dialektik überwunden werden können. Auf die Definitionsprobleme wird in den meisten Untersuchungen über diese Gattung

hingewiesen (vgl. z. B. Wuthenow 1990: IX.). Die nachfolgenden Ausführungen sollen einigen dieser Widersprüchen und Zwiespältigkeiten nachgehen und die inneren Spannungen des Tagebuches sichtbar machen.

Produktionsästhetische Aporien: Einsamkeit des Diaristen vs. Publikwerdung?

Die Einstellung der Diaristen ist der Gattung gegenüber häufig aporetisch, widersprüchlich und von bestimmten Spannungen belebt. Es handelt es sich ja um eine Textsorte, die prototypisch zum persönlichen Gebrauch bestimmt ist. So, als privater Gebrauchstext, wurde das Tagebuch gelegentlich auch zu der sogenannten 4. Gattung gezählt und damit als außerhalb der Aristotelischen Trias stehend betrachtet (vgl. z. B. Vogt 1999: 87).[1]

Die meisten Diaristen schreiben das Tagebuch in der Einsamkeit (vgl. Vogelgesang 185: 189), für sich selbst, wie Heyden-Rynsch es resümiert hat, „der Diarist ist ein Mensch der Einsamkeit" (Heyden-Rynsch 1997: 11). Natürlich kann heutzutage das Tagebuch öffentlich, etwa im Internet, geführt werden, doch solche modernen Erscheinungen benötigen eines anderen Zuganges und werden an dieser Stelle nicht berücksichtigt.

Trotz der Einsamkeit des Tagebuchführenden haben viele Diaristen durchaus die Möglichkeit der Veröffentlichung mitberücksichtigt, mit diesem Gedanken gespielt, auch wenn dieser nicht unbedingt die erste Intention gewesen ist. Es ist auffallend, dass bei vielen Tagebüchern ein Leser mitbedacht wird und die Einsamkeit ist deshalb nicht mehr vollkommen. Gelegentlich werden Tagebücher bereits zu Lebzeiten veröffentlicht. Insbesondere ist dies bei Schriftstellern bzw. literarisch versierten Personen der Fall. Der österreichische Autor Heimito von Doderer, z. T. auch der estnische Lyriker und Literaturwissenschaftler Ivar Ivask gehören dazu.

Diese potentielle, auch wenn zunächst nicht vorhandene, aber in der Zukunft durchaus mögliche Leserschaft bedingt in vielen

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[1] Vgl. auch die Onlineversion des Buches: www.uni-essen.de/literaturwissenschaft-aktiv/einladung.htm [25.01.2007]

Tagebüchern ein bestimmtes Maß an Zensur. Oft werden (peinliche) Intimitäten vermieden, aber auch im Wortgebrauch achtet man auf Anstand – alles Hinweise auf die Rücksichtnahme auf das Publikum und darauf, dass man doch die Preisgabe des Textes an eine Leserschaft letztendlich akzeptiert. Sicherlich ist der Verschriftlichung, der grafischen Festlegung der Gedanken immer ein Bewusstsein immanent, dass zumindest potentiell der Text gelesen werden könnte. Unter anderem ist der Schreibende selbst später mal ein Leser, der – aus der zeitlichen Distanz – dem Geschriebenen anders gegenüber stehen kann. Indirekt sprechen von einem – ungewollten – Publikumsbezug auch manche Strategien, die in den Tagebüchern eingesetzt werden, um die Wahrscheinlichkeit des (ungewollten) Gelesen-werdens zu reduzieren. So können Kürzel u. a. Mittel eingesetzt werden, um den Text für fremde Leser möglichst unzugänglich zu machen.

Um das Problem anders zu benennen: Einerseits ist immer wieder in der Forschung hervorgehoben worden, dass das Tagebuch einen monologischen Charakter hat (z. B. Wilpert 1989: 918, Heyden-Rynsch 1997: 9), andererseits stellt etwa Paul Michael Lützeler fest, dass auch dialogische Elemente hier durchaus präsent sind. Als Belege wären hier solche Übergangsgattungen wie Tagebuchbriefe, wie Hermann Broch solche etwa für Ea von Allesch verfasst hat (Lützeler 1995: 171) oder das Tagebuch von Anne Frank, wo das Tagebuch als Gesprächspartner (Kitty) angeredet wird, zu nennen. Andere Autoren, wie etwa Schönborn, weisen sogar darauf hin, dass die Kultur des Tagebuchschreibens aus der Simulation mündlicher Kommunikation entsteht, und betonen damit eben die dialogische Konstruktion des Tagebuches (Schönborn 1999: 284).

Hiermit ist kurz der erste Widerspruch des Diariums umrissen: Es geht um eine sehr private, intime Textsorte, die scheinbar nur für den Eigengebrauch bestimmt ist, doch dieser Kreis der adressatenlosen (bzw. autoreflexiven) Kommunikation kann transzendiert und der Weg vor ein größeres Publikum genommen werden. Es liegt hier eine zweifache Kodierung vor: die des autoreflexiven Textes und die des auf das Publikum bezogenen Textes. Des Weiteren impliziert die Einsamkeit des Tagebuchschreibenden einerseits das Auslassen der sozialen Identität und des Spiegels des Anderen, also auch Identitätsverlust,

andererseits geht es hier stets auch um die Suche nach der Identität und mögliche Definitionen eben dessen (vgl. Le Rider 2002: 24f.).

Authentischer Text als Geschichtsquelle vs. Rollenspiel

Oft wird den Tagebüchern Aufrichtigkeit, Authentizität zugeordnet. So schreibt etwa Hermann Broch am Anfang seines Tagebuches an Ea von Allesch: „ein Tagebuch [muss] etwas ganz Aufrichtiges sein […]" (Broch 1995: 9). Das Tagebuch ist ein faktualer Text, wo man oft auch nach einer historischen Wahrheit im Sinne einer objektivierbaren Verifikation sucht. Wenn wir von der Terminologie von Jürgen H. Petersen in seiner Studie „Die Fiktionalität der Dichtung und die Seinsfrage der Philosophie" (2002) ausgehen, dominiert im Tagebuch die Wirklichkeitsaussage, die gebrachten Tatsachen könnten empirisch überprüft werden. In dem Sinne besteht der bekannte autobiographische Pakt (Lejeune) hier in einer abgewandelten Form (insoweit der Publikumsbezug ambivalent ist) (vgl. dazu Le Rider: 2002: 22).

Die Einschätzung des Tagebuches als einer authentischen Textsorte hängt unter anderem mit dem oben skizzierten primären Bezug des Diskurses auf die eigene Person in Zusammenhang: Wenn man zunächst nur selbst der eigene einzige Rezipient ist, wobei darüber hinaus eine Übereinstimmung zwischen der diaristischen Instanz und dem Protagonisten besteht (vgl. Heinrich-Korpys 2003: 83), gibt es zunächst keinen Grund davon auszugehen, dass in einem Tagebuch die Lüge dominieren würde. Man schreibt, um zu schreiben oder für sich (bzw. an das eigene alter Ego) – egal ob es hier um eine befreiende autopsychothepeutische Funktion, um eine Art Meditation, Beichte geht, wird die Gattung als Mittel der Selbsterziehung verwendet (nach Le Rider ist das Tagebuch „Ort der autodidaktischen Propädeutik der sozialen Norm" 2002: 23) oder aber für die Dokumentation für den späteren persönlichen Gebrauch usw. Man schreibt aufrichtig, wie an eine Art Spiegel, der alles wieder auf den Sender zurückschickt, also, semiotisch gesprochen, entsteht hier zunächst eine Art geschlossene Struktur, wo die Nachricht zu seinem Sender zurückkehrt.

Also ist das Tagebuch auf der ersten Ebene autoreflexiv, ein verschriftlichtes Selbstgespräch, ein externer innerer Monolog. Diese Spiegelstruktur ist mit einer der Gründe, beim Tagebuch von einer Authentizität auszugehen und es auch als Geschichtsquelle ernstzunehmen. Als weiterer Aspekt ist hier der Bezug auf die unmittelbare Vergangenheit zu nennen. Damit fehlt die deformierende retrospektive Perspektive (vgl. Heinrich-Korpys 2003: 86).

Wie eben oben ausgeführt, ist dennoch ein (ungewünschter, zukünftiger) Leser als eine Zensurinstanz präsent. So wird hier die Kreisbewegung durchbrochen und das Signal, die Botschaft erreicht dann doch potentiell einen Empfänger, der mit dem Sender nicht deckungsgleich ist.

Unter anderem wegen solch einer komplexen Kommunikationsstruktur muss man doch auch bei den Tagebüchern auch Elemente des Rollenspiels berücksichtigen. Schon die oben erwähnte (Selbst)Zensurproblematik gehört dazu. Darüber hinaus sind in diesem Zusammenhang auch andere Problemfelder wie Gedächtnisprobleme sowie die Fragen, die sich aus der Unmöglichkeit die Zeit zu verdoppeln ergeben und die so oder anders notwendigen Selektion betreffen, zu berücksichtigen, aber auch das ganze sehr komplexe Feld der Identität.

Die Forschung ist sich mittlerweile darüber einig, dass man bei den selbstreflexiven Texten auch von den Elementen der bewussten Fiktionalisierung ausgehen soll, ja dass dies oft sogar ein integraler Bestandteil der Selbstdarstellung sei (vgl. Holdenried 1991: 89). Natürlich ist Fiktionalität eines Textes etwas, was sich nach der Kommunikationsituation bestimmen lässt und dessen Grad von Fall zu Fall überprüft werden soll. Das Tagebuch dient also auch der „Erfindung des Ichs" (Gustav René Hoche), dem Entwurf der eigenen Individualität (vgl. Schönborn 1999: 1f.), der bewussten Selbsterfindung im Text, im Bezug auf sich selbst ebenso wie im Bezug auf den Anderen, darum bilden diese Monologe einen Schlüssel zum Verständnis des jeweiligen Individuums wie auch seiner Zeit (Heyden-Rynsch 1997: 9). Wie Jurgensen, einer der bekanntesten frühen deutschen Forscher der Gattung diese Aporie zusammengefasst hat: „das Tagebuch (wird) als Mittel der Selbststilisierung verwendet; im diarischen Ich-Theater findet der

Autor seine literarische Identität. Das Ich begibt sich auf die Suche nach einer ihm gemäßen Form" (Jurgensen 1979: 17). Der polnische Literaturwissenschaftler Gugulski hat die Selbstdarstellung im Tagebuch als „einer Art Brücke zwischen dem, was ein Mensch ist, und dem, was er sein möchte" bezeichnet (Gugulski 2002: 9).

Es geht um den Wunsch der Diaristen, sich selbst durch den Text eine Existenz zu verleihen: Die Gattung Tagebuch ermöglicht die Ausbildung einer an die Schrift gebundenen Individualitätsstruktur (vgl. Schönborn 1999: 1ff.). Die Individualität des Verfassers wird gebunden an den Textbegriff. Buch und Seele stehen miteinander in einer engen Beziehung: Es geht um das Postulat, dass nur das erzählte Leben einen Sinn hat (vgl. Le Rider 2002: 22). Ich schreibe, also bin ich. „Das Medium wird zum nach außen gestülpten Bewußtsein; seine Struktur zum Abbild der eigenen Bewußtseinsfunktion" (Schönborn 1999: 13).

Also lässt sich beim Tagebuch oft nicht trennen, ob der Text eindeutig realitätsbezogen ist oder aber eher Vorgestelltes darstellt. Die Trennung zwischen Faktum und Fiktion ist verwischt, die Referenzobjekte gehören neben der real existierenden Welt auch der des Entwurfs an, es ist die Realität im Kopf des Verfassers. Dem Faktischen wird das Mögliche an die Seite gestellt (Görner 1986: 34), mit dem Ich wird gespielt.

Es ist möglich, dass im Tagebuch die Sprache nicht auf die außersprachlichen Elemente hinweist, sondern auch auf das Tagebuch und auf die Sprache, dass das Tagebuch und die Sprache thematisiert und zum Gegenstand des Erlebnisses werden.

In der Konsequenz kann man Louis Renza zustimmen, der behauptet, dass Autobiographien weder fiktional noch nicht-fiktiv seien (Vgl. Holdenried 1991: 90).

Aporien der Zeit

Zu Beginn des Tagebuches, bei fast allen Tagebucheintragungen steht ein Zeitpunkt. Man schreibt ein Datum, gelegentlich notiert man auch eine Ortsbezeichnung daneben. Dies ist der Zeitpunkt des Schreibens, der hier neben der Zeit der Handlung eine wichtige Rolle

spielt. Während bei den fiktionalen Texten vor allem die Zeit des Geschehens, der Handlung bzw. die Gegenwart der Protagonisten eine zentrale Rolle spielt und der Zeitpunkt des Schreibens, zumindest textimmanent betrachtet, irrelevant ist, wird im Tagebuch auch dem Zeitpunkt des Schreibens eine zentrale Bedeutung beigemessen.

Das Tagebuch geht von der Chronologie, vom Kalender, der sog. objektiven (linearen) Zeit aus. Andererseits handelt es sich um die subjektive Zeit des Diaristen. Die Zeit sei dann nicht nur „ein Nachlaufen einer objektiven Zeitlinie, sondern Entwurf eines Ganzen, das Teile in sich enthält: Beziehungsmomente auf Früheres und Beziehungsmomente auf Späteres" (Baumgartner 1994: 193f). Aus dieser Spannung, die zwischen der objektiven Chronologie einerseits und der subjektbezogenen Erfahrung dessen besteht, und dem Versuch, das Ganze im Text zu erfassen, lebt die Gattung des Tagebuches.

Das Tagebuch strukturiert die Zeit und die Welt des Schreibers zu einer Narration, fixiert diese und bewahrt sie vor dem Untergang in der Zeitlosigkeit. Diese Bemerkungen stimmen vor allem bei den biografisch orientierten Tagebüchern, denn bei Aufzeichnungen, deren Hauptaugenmerk auf die Gedankenwelt, auf die Niederschrift der Lektüreerlebnisse, der neuen Denkanstöße gerichtet ist, entsteht naturgemäß kein physisch bestimmbarer Raum, sondern vielmehr ein Raum, welcher, vergleichbar mit der fiktionalen Literatur, in der Welt der Ideen zu orten ist.

Das Tagebuch ist, wie bereits der Name sagt, ist eine Darstellung des Tagesgeschehens. Damit liegt hier der Narration eine lineare Zeitachse (Kalender) zugrunde, man schreitet sukzessive schreibend von einem Tag zum anderen und stellt das jeweils subjektiv Wichtige dar. Also beschreiben die Tagebücher den Weg eines Menschen in der Zeit. Oder aber, sie machen für denjenigen, der das Tagebuch führt, die Zeit bewusst, ermöglichen es ihm, mit der Zeit aperzeptiv umzugehen, sich in der Zeit zu sehen. Also stehen hier zwei Pole, eine ständige Genese in der Zeit und eine Statik, die durch die Niederschrift des Gewesenen zustande kommt, einander gegenüber.

Als eine Art Parenthese sei erwähnt, dass aus dem täglichen Schreiben auch ein sehr beträchtlicher Umfang des Geschriebenen

resultieren kann. So wird einer, der 40 Jahre lang täglich 3 Seiten schreibt, mit 40 Jahren 43800 Seiten aufs Papier bringen. Ivar Ivask etwa hat ein Tagebuch in 56 Bänden mit ca. 20 000 Seiten verfasst (vgl. Taremäe 1993: 207). So umfangreiche Textkorpora, die im Laufe einer längeren Zeitspanne verfasst sind, sind heterogen und wegen des beträchtlichen Umfangs auch als Gegenstand der Forschung undankbar.

Zurück zu der Zeitproblematik: Die Entstehungsbedingungen des Tagebuches und der zumindest intentional täglich erfolgende Schreibprozess haben für die für das Tagebuch so wichtigen Narration der Zeit manche weiteren Konsequenzen: Es kann zum einen aufgrund der Entwicklung der Person ab der Geburt zu einer sich reflektierenden Persönlichkeit hierbei nicht um eine Narration ab ovo gehen. Es liegt hier also immer eine Vorgeschichte vor, die Konflikte, die im Tagebuch dargelegt werden, haben Hintergründe in den (kindlichen) früheren Erfahrungen. Ein bestimmtes Erlebnismodell, das die (sich verwandelnden) Sichtweisen des erzählenden Ichs prägt, liegt zu Beginn der Aufzeichnungen immer vor. Also handelt es sich hierbei immer um eine Erzählung in medias res. Diesem Umstand ist auch ein Teil der gelegentlichen Abweichungen in der Chronologie der Erzählung zu zuschreiben: Der Ich-Erzähler fühlt sich in einem Kontext an etwas erinnert und versucht das gerade Erlebte in einen größeren Kontext einzubetten. Es kann sich hierbei entweder um früherer eigene Erlebnisse, aber auch etwa um Weltgeschichte, Literaturerlebnisse o. Ä. handeln. Diese Rückblicke in die Vergangenheit stiften Kohärenz in einer Handlungsfolge, die andersrum nicht als logische erscheinen mag. Dem Bedürfnis des Menschen, die eigene Person als ein einheitliches Ich im Tagebuch zu konstituieren, vielleicht auch sich sich selbst gegenüber zu rechtfertigen, wird hier Rechnung getragen.

Im Bewusstsein des Tagebuchführenden sind diese Rückblicke fast gegenwärtig: die „aufsteigenden Erinnerungen", wie Doderer dies bezeichnet hat, sind für die jeweilige Person durchaus nicht als historisch zu sehen, sondern sie reichen als nicht zu Ende geführte Probleme durchaus in die Geschichte hinein.

Der Zeitpunkt, an dem man mit der Dokumentation des eigenen Zeitgeschehens beginnt, der also als Schreibanlass fungiert, kann

vom Tagebuchführenden unterschiedlich gewählt werden. Die Wahl hängt hier auch von der Funktion des Tagebuches im Leben der betreffenden Person ab. Am deutlichsten ist es bei den zweckgebundenen Tagebüchern: Wenn man vor hat, eine bestimmte Ereignisfolge, in etwa eine Reise, zu dokumentieren, hängt die Entscheidung, mit dem Schreibprozess anzufangen, mit den jeweiligen Ereignissen zusammen (vgl. etwa Smuul 1959 oder Keyserling 1919). Anders ist es aber, wenn man sich dazu entscheidet, aus welchen Gründen immer, alles, was einem zustößt, in der Form eines Tagebuches niederzuschreiben, unter anderem als Selbstreflektion. In dem Fall kommen alle Zeitpunkte in Frage, doch wird auffallend oft ein aus irgendeinem Grund signifikanter Tag ausgewählt. So scheint etwa der 1. Januar, der erste Tag des Jahres,[2] ein magisches Datum zu sein, denn auffallend oft wird eben an diesem Tag ein Versuch unternommen, sich der meditativen Disziplin des täglichen Schreibens zu unterwerfen. Im Tagebuch muss der Beginn des Narrativs also nicht mit einem Zustandsveränderung zusammenhängen, der Schreibprozess selbst macht hier diese Veränderung aus.

Auf der anderen Seite, am anderen Ende des Zeitstrahls gibt es ebenso Erlebnisse, über die man im Tagebuch nicht erzählen kann: Vor allem gehört der eigene Tod zu solchen Erfahrungen, über die in einem Tagebuch naturgemäß nichts stehen kann. (Den klinischen Tod muss man hier wohl nicht berücksichtigen.) Daraus resultiert, dass ein Tagebuch, soweit es sich nicht um ein Tagebuch eines bestimmten Ereignisses oder um ein Tagebuch, das man über jemanden Anderen führt, handelt, kein konkretes Ende haben kann. So ist das Tagebuch, um sich der Terminologie der Dramatheorie zu bedienen, eine tendenziell offene Gattung.

Zwischen diesen beiden Zeitpolen des Tagebuches spielt sich eine Geschichte ab: ein Weg von der Vergangenheit in die Zukunft, wobei ein Ziel bei den nicht mit einem äußeren Zweck gebundenen Tagebüchern nicht vorhanden ist. Man erreicht (oder eben nicht) bestimmte Zwischenziele, doch ein Endpunkt, ein letztes Ziel, kann – wie oben ausgeführt – nicht erreicht werden. Also muss dem

[2] Vgl. z.B. Hennetmair 2000: 19; Ivar Ivask wählte eben den 1. Januar 1964 zum ersten Tag, an dem er sich der Disziplin des Tagebuches unterworfen hat.

Tagebuch auch keine Spannung zugrunde liegen. Eher wird hier eine geborgene Welt gestiftet, das Tagebuch wird zu einem vertraulichen Gesprächspartner.

Des weiteren bedingen die Modalitäten, unter denen die Tagebücher geführt werden, einen primären Bezug auf die unmittelbare Vergangenheit. Man ist über die Zukunft im ungewissen und kann oft die Konsequenzen der Ereignisse nicht abschätzen. Damit ist in gewisser Hinsicht die Kraft der Verallgemeinerung, die den fiktionalen Texten oft charakteristisch ist, nicht gegeben. Aus der beschränkten Perspektive des Tagebuchführenden ergibt sich eher eine Rückwärtsgewandtheit der Gattung.

Freilich, der Tagebuchführende kann auch über die mögliche Zukunft nachsinnen, doch ist diesem Nachdenken über das noch nicht Gewesene ein deutliches Merkmal des Utopischen eigen. Diese beschränkte Sicht, die Nähe zum Geschehen machen das Tagebuch auch so interessant, zu einem Zeitzeugnis.

Die dargestellte Vergangenheit ist dabei primär eine Nahvergangenheit, Fast-Gegenwart, denn der Gattungsbezeichnung entsprechend konzentriert man sich vor allem auf das Geschehen des jeweiligen Tages (vgl. Roberts 2002: 66). Hier wären folgende Konsequenzen zu nennen: Da das schriftlich Niedergelegte erst vor sehr kurzer Zeit passierte, hat man im Vergleich zu späteren Niederschrift auch die Details noch im Gedächtnis. Insbesondere wenn man Notizen gemacht hat, ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass man das Gewesene doch aus der eigenen subjektiven Perspektive adäquat darstellt, hoch. In diesem Sinne werden die Tagebücher auch als Geschichtsquellen eingesetzt. Andererseits geht es im Tagebuch meist um Ereignisse, die einem aus seiner beschränkten Perspektive relevant erscheinen.

Dieser Weg des Menschen im Tagebuch ermöglicht dem Leser eine Zeitreise: Wir können uns in eine „Zeitmaschine" setzen, und durch die Augen des Tagebuchführenden etwas sehen, was wir sonst nie erfahren würden. Freilich, diese Zeitreisen führen uns nur in die Vergangenheit, genauer gesagt, in die neuzeitliche Geschichte, die in diesen persönlichen Chroniken festgehalten wird.

Aus der Darstellung der Zeit, die oft eng mit einer Empfindung der Geschichtlichkeit und des Vergehens des Gegenwärtigen

zusammenhängt (Ewigkeit vs. Vergänglichkeit), entsteht ein meist historisch genau bestimmbarer Raum sowie ein Beziehungsgeflecht unter den Menschen, über die neben dem Schreibenden berichtet wird. Es entsteht hier aber auch eine Geschichte, ein Narrativ, dem eine Bedeutung im Leben der jeweiligen Person zukommt. So bürgt das Tagebuch auch für die Kontinuierlichkeit im Leben des Tagebuchführenden. Freilich ist dies eine Illusion. Wie Dieter Sturma (1997: 63) den besonderen Status der Menschen charakterisiert, sind sie „sich ihrer Kontingenz bewusst". Das Leben ist endlich, verläuft in einem Netz von Zufall und Notwendigkeit. Die Zeit, diese meine Zeit könnte also anders geschaffen sein. Daher sind eben „[...] Versuche, selbstbestimmte Kontiuitäten im personalen Leben und im sozialen Raum etablieren zu wollen [...] von Anbeginn illusionär." (ib. 64) Allerdings stellt Sturma fest, dass unser personales Dasein ein zeitlich formierter Lebensraum sei und dass wir als „Personen distanziert und reflektiert in der Zeit mit Zeit umgehen" (ib. 72). Wie etwa in einem Tagebuch, das dank seiner Formeigenschaften alles zusammenfassen kann und wo die Kontingenz, zumindest illusorisch, überwunden werden kann.

Formlosigkeit als Form

Es handelt sich beim Tagebuch darüber hinaus um eine Textsorte, der Spontanität zugeordnet wird. Aus dem chronologischen Schreib-Prinzip resultiert unter anderem, dass man hier eher nicht von einer Bearbeitung des bereits Geschriebenen ausgeht. Der Text eines „wirklichen" Tagebuches kann eventuell später ergänzt werden, doch wird von einer (stilistischen) Bearbeitung nicht ausgegangen. Dass heißt unter anderem, dass wir in den Tagebüchern oft „Fehler" finden können, die wir einem durchkomponierten literarischen Text eher nicht hätten, angefangen von dem Schwanken der Zeitformen in der Narration eines bestimmten Geschehens, der Uneindeutigkeit der Personalpronomina, bishin zu eher diffus formulierten und daher gelegentlich nur für den Verfasser sinnvollen Passagen. Es gibt gelegentlich eindeutige grammatische Unkorrektheiten.

Wegen der sukzessiven nicht korrigierenden Schreibprogression tragen die diaristischen Aufzeichnungen stets auch eine Möglichkeit der Revision in sich. Der Blick des Schreibenden, seine Perspektive ist beschränkt und manche Ansichten können auch zurückgenommen werden. Oft ist der Text der Notate kaum kohärent, es gibt Wiederholungen, Widersprüche und Inkonsequenzen werden schrankenlos geduldet.

Damit haftet der Gattung aber auch das Stigma des Unvollendeten an. Es wird in manchen Kontexten als eine zweitrangige Gattung betrachtet (z.B. bei Wilpert: „Form der nicht kunstmäßigen Prosa" – 1989: 918) , als eine Vorform eben. Es geht hierbei oft primär um das Stoffliche, auch wenn die Form der Aussage durchaus nicht irrelevant ist. Die Form Tagebuch ist soweit offen, dass man hier auch von einer gewissen Formlosigkeit sprechen kann. Ein Tagebuch kann sowohl kurze stichwortartige Notizen als auch längere, zusammenhängende Gedanken mit einem fast essaystischen Charakter, Beschreibungen von Natur und Architektur ebenso beinhalten, wie Bekenntnisse unterschiedlicher Art.

Die Diarien können sehr unterschiedliche Formen annehmen. Wegen dieser Unvollkommenheit sowie der Verbundenheit mit dem Leben ist das Tagebuch eine Gattung, die keinesfalls nur ein Metier von Schriftstellern ist: Auch Personen, für die das Schreiben keinesfalls die Haupttätigkeit ist, trauen sich ohne weiteres diese, keine hohen Ansprüche stellende Gattung zu. Es gibt auch Berufsgruppen, die Tagebuch führen müssen (Handels- und Kursmakler etwa, vgl. Rechtswörterbuch 1994: 1161). Kurz: das Problem der der jeweiligen Zeit adäquaten Schreibweise muss hier nicht im Vordergrund stehen. Es kann und darf ein Werkstattbericht des privaten Lebens sein.

Andererseits ist das Tagebuch von manchen Diaristen sehr wohl als eine Form verstanden worden. Heimito von Doderer etwa, in dessen Romanen auch die Helden Chroniken führen und der sein Schreiben als „Theologumenon" (Schmidt-Dengler 1995: 13) verstand, bemühte sich sehr wohl um eine Form des Tagebuches. In seinen Tagebüchern, die er ab 1934 als Commentarii bezeichnet hat, hat er etwa für verschiedene Texttypen unterschiedliche Farben verwendet, also ist es nicht nur auf der sprachlichen linearen Ebene

eine Kunstform, sondern auch auf der flächenhaften: ein unikates handschriftliches Gesamtkunstwerk. Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler hat dies als einen „entscheidenden Formwillen [verstanden], der auch in der schriftlichen Wortgestalt manifest werden soll" (ib.). Ähnliches lässt sich auch in Bezug auf das sehr umfangreiche „Päevik" von Ivar Ivask behaupten: die Seiten des Manuskripts sind nicht nur mit Schriftzeichen ausgefüllt, sondern enthalten daneben auch Fotos, farbige Zeichnungen usw. Das Tagebuch wird hier zu einem unikaten Kunstwerk.

Aporien der Tradition: Traditionsgebundenheit vs. Quelle der ästhetischen Innovation

Ein Merkmal, das paradoxerweise zur Beliebtheit der Gattung beiträgt, ist der Umstand, dass die Tagebücher in ihrer Form selten innovativ sind. Es geht ja hier oft entweder um ein lineares Erzählen bzw. werden aphoristische Gedanken und Aufzeichnungen fragmentarisch ohne größere Komposition aneinander gereiht. Infolge dessen besteht bei den Diarien zumindest auf der formellen Ebene kein Bedarf, große ästhetische Distanz zu überwinden. Diese Texte sind in der Regel relativ leicht zugänglich. Man geht davon aus, dass wir bei der Beurteilung über die Tagebücher nicht die ästhetischen Kriterien (zumindest im Sinne einer Regelpoetik) einsetzen können. In diesem Kontext sei auch darauf hingewiesen, dass die lange Tagebuchtradition keine normative Gattungspoetik hervorgebracht hat – im Vergleich etwa zu der benachbarten Gattung des Briefes.

Interessant ist, dass schon in der früheren epischen Literatur dasselbe Modell des allmählich fortschreitenden Darstellens, die die Entwicklung und die Umgebung der betreffenden Person so deutlich uns vor Augen führt, sehr oft eingesetzt wurde. Es ist daher nicht von ungefähr, dass einer der frühesten Roman in der deutschen Sprache sich der Form des Tagebuches bedient: Goethes „Die Leiden des jungen Werther" benutzt zu Kunstzwecken alle Gattungsmerkmale des Tagebuches (in der Briefform) und überbrückt die Schranken der Gattung an manchen Stellen durch Herausgeberberichte. Auch zu

späteren Zeiten wird die Bezeichnung Tagebuch für bestimmte, auch literarische Zwecke eingesetzt.

Andererseits wird immer wieder behauptet, dass das Tagebuch wichtige innovative Schübe anderen epischen Texten gegeben habe, dass das Tagebuch sogar die einflussreichste autobiographische Gattung überhaupt sei: Die „nicht-narrative Ästhetik" des Tagebuches entscheidenden Einfluss auf andere Textsorten ausgeübt habe (Vgl. Holdenried 1991: 117f.). Die fragmentarische Form, die Disparatheit und die Fähigkeit, sehr Unterscheidliches zu integrieren, macht das Tagebuch zu einem Vorbild mancher Vorgänge in der modernen Epik schlechthin. Auch im 20. Jahrhundert wurde nach der Ansicht mancher Forscher die Form des Tagebuches für die schöngeistige Literatur inspirierend: die Authentizität sowie die unvermittelte Kommunikatiossituation im Tagebuch, die ein „Ausweichen vor dem Erzählproblem" (vgl. dazu ib. 36) ermöglichte.

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Zusammenfassend sind es vielleicht eben diese Widersprüche, die die paradoxe Gattung des Tagebuches konstituieren, ein Genre, das nicht unbedingt eine Gattung sein will, das wegen seiner freien Subjektivität und der unendlichen Spielmöglichkeiten auch weiterhin ein alternatives künstlerisches Ausdrucksmittel sein wird, welches auch im literarischen Diskurs seine Rolle spielt.

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Contemporary Translation Philosophy: Cannibalism or Symbiosis?[1]

JÜRI TALVET

Questioning the identity of theory

In a recent issue of *Interlitteraria*, Dorothy Figueira provides examples of how postcolonial literary theory in its postmodern manifestations has lost almost any connection with postcolonial literature itself (Figueira 2005). Instead of helping to understand intellectual and spiritual processes of the "third world", the fashion-creators of postcolonial theory derive from their by today withered postulates fantasies rewritten in ever more sophisticated language, whose purpose, as Figueira suggests, is hardly any other than to strengthen institutionally their position at US universities. What really takes place in literary and cultural life of the "third world", does not seem to interest theory.

In the same issue of *Interlitteraria*, the Moroccan researcher Ismail el-Outmani concludes that despite the widely claimed radical novelty of postmodern theory, in the formation and perpetuation of the canon of world literature an Occidento-centric point of view continues to dominate. Those who establish canons at Western centres do not reveal any interest in how the canon is viewed by the "other", even though they talk a lot about the latter (el-Outmani 2005).

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[1] The present article was first published in Estonian: Mõtteid tänapäeva tõlkefilosoofiast. Kas antropofaagia või sümbioos? – *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 5, 2006, pp. 353–364. It has also been published in Spanish: En torno a la filosofía contemporánea de la traducción: ¿antropofagia o simbiosis? – *Debats*, 4, 2006, pp. 63–77.

By coincidence, in the same issue of *Interlitteraria* the author of the present lines calls for a meditation about literature establishing a symbiotic relationship between theory and literary creation itself, for the identification theory as a means for understanding, interpreting and generalizing literature, not as something that is justified *per se*, for instance in the cases when theory "forgets" about its object outside itself (Talvet 2005).

The above said concerns directly the questions connected with translation – as process and product – on a theoretical as well as practical ground. Here too one can observe how theory has moved away, almost by a "leap", from the historical practice of translation, to find itself in a labyrinth of auto-contemplation. An explication and enlightenment of translation have been replaced by an intentional obfuscation, mystification and dispersion of the object. Translation, according to these theories, becomes a synonym of whatever transformation, modification and transference process in culture and society.

Another tendency that can be observed in the discourse about translation is the "sexualization" or sexual fecundation of the object (translation) and the subject (translator, agent). It is not difficult to discover, as its background, the meditations of Michel Foucault about sexuality and power.

One of the conclusions of Yuri Lotman was the impossibility of describing the semiosphere and culture without relating them to non-culture or, according to this conception, to the non-semiotized space. If we imagine translation as a semiotic model of the functioning of culture, as does, for instance, Peeter Torop in his article (of a somewhat ambiguous title) "Translation as translating as culture" (Torop 2002), an extension of the discourse about translation to the relations between life and conscience in their totality and, thus, entering the intricate domain of theology and metaphysics seems to become inevitable.

On my part, I would prefer in the discussion that follows to limit myself to a much earthier and less ambitious discourse, focused on the translation of literary works. Of its present-day theoretical state, a comprehensive overview is provided in an article by Assumpta Camps. (Camps 2005).

The mediation of the product of creative writing

The main topic of the theories and treatises about translation characterized in the article of Camps is translation as mediation from one language to another of the product of creative writing. A number of its conclusions depart from translation of poetry.

In Chapter 1 of her article, "Traduttore-traditore", Camps makes a short excursion to the history of translation, asserting that in the Renaissance humanists firmly respected the ancient classical tradition, while translations were treated as subordinated by, and even inferior, to the original works.

In rough lines, it is true. However, I think would be appropriate to mention the amplitude of the notion of humanism itself, as well as some important historical shifts in its interpretation.[2] Very early some European writers who, doubtless, were humanists in the traditional and original sense – as researchers and propagators of the ideals of ancient Greek and Roman culture – "translated" humanism itself into a much wider notion, which went beyond a blind submission to the authority of the ancient authors. It started with Petrarca and Boccaccio, and was continued in the work of Rabelais, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, Cervantes, Gracián, Tirso de Molina, Calderón and other great Renaissance or post-Renaissance spirits.

In a number of essential questions, Petrarca dared to dispute the authority of Saint Augustine himself. He "translated" the eclogue without rhymes of the ancient poetics and the rhymed *canso* of troubadours into the highly elaborated Renaissance *canzone*, in which rhymes and rhythms entered a much more complicated relationship than it was in the late medieval poetics. Boccaccio "translated" the primitively simple popular *novella*, the ancient fables and late medieval chivalry stories into the aesthetically elaborated short narrative of modern times. Rabelais "translated" the ancient utopian story into the utopian-philosophic novel that on the

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[2] About a strongly simplified conception to which some postmodern theories have subjected humanism, see my article "The Revolt of Humanism. Deconstruction Deconstructed. An Introduction" (*Interlitteraria* 2003, 8, pp. 144–155).

linguistic-ludic level – as regards the genre of the novel – had to remain unsurpassed until James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Montaigne "translated" the ancient philosophic(-moral) treatise and epistle into the sovereign essay, a hybrid genre between belles-lettres and philosophy. Not to speak of Shakespeare and Lope de Vega, whose "translation work" brought about an entire revolution in drama and theatre of modern times.

Such a "translation" in which tradition and creative renewal entered a truly symbiotic relation was above all widespread in the last phase of the Renaissance and in Baroque.

Without it, some of the boldest manifestations about the independence of translation and translator along the 17th century, as described in the article by Camps, would have been impossible. Even more so, these opinions were supported by translation practice. As translation was not at all limited to the mediation between the ancient world and the expanding new Europe, but ever more became a coeval cross-European exchange of literary values, the opinion according to which translation was an autonomous work of art started to prevail. It was generally understood that if a favorable reception of a foreign literary work was desired, its "domestication" in the cultural-linguistic sense proved to be inevitable.

Following such a principle of "domestication", the Englishman James Mabbe (in the 1st half of the 17th century) translated into English several masterpieces of Spanish literature, like *La Celestina*, of Fernando de Rojas, and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, of Mateo Alemán. The same "domestication" principle was widely applied by other translators of the epoch.

One should not forget either the obviousness that any translator who is seriously devoted to the mediation of belles-lettres, creates his/her own intellectual principles, a theory that is reflected in his/her translation practice. In the same way, any writer whose work is characterized by a aesthetic-philosophical search, has his/her own literary theory, independently if it is displayed in an explicit theoretical discourse or not. For the same reason, for instance, I have interpreted Cervantes's *Novelas ejemplares* as the author's narrative theory, a theory in images (Talvet 2003).

The ethical-legal relation between author and translator

On the same ground, quite early the question about the ethical-legal relationship between the author and the translator came forth. It is well known that French writers of the 17th and 18th century exploited massively Spanish texts as models for their own literary works. Among the most eloquent examples of such practices Pierre Corneille's tragedy *Le Cid* and comedy *Le Menteur* stand out. Their plots, respectively, rely almost entirely on Guillén de Castro's *Las mocedades del Cid*, and Juan Ruiz de Alarcón's *La verdad sospechosa*. Are they creative translations by Corneille, or simply a plagiarism? If the author of the translation imitates extensively an original text, but nonetheless does not admit publicly his/her indebtedness with the original author of the text, can a creative translation be qualified in other terms than intellectual theft?

In the same manner, even at the beginning of the 18th century, the Frenchman Alain-René Lesage imitated-"translated" in his novel *Gil Blas* various Spanish picaresque novels, so that from the Spanish side for a long time he was blamed for plagiarism. The title and the first pages of the novel *Le Diable boiteux*, of Lesage, are indeed almost a literal translation of Luis Vélez de Guevara's novel *El diablo cojuelo.*

To resume it: ought we to treat the above mentioned works of Corneille and Lesage as "cannibalistic translations" described by Camps on the basis of the texts by Oswald de Andrade's "Manifiesto antropófago" and other texts by Brazilian theorists (as Haroldo and Augusto de Campos and Else Vieira)?

At the same time it also remains a fact that while European literature along the 17th century was saturated with all kinds of plagiarisms, from the second half the 19th century, in parallel with the rapidly growing scientific-positivistic activity and a long "leap" in the spread of information, "cannibalism" in the field of translation was clearly reduced.

From the 20th century, copyright is being protected by international laws that prohibit to copy, imitate or translate, entirely or partially, original works without the consent the author, his/her heirs or publisher. Should we interpret these laws as something

contradicting the impulses of creative writing based on (semi-)translation?

At the start of 2006 a play by Toomas Hussar, *Sada aastat...*(*A Hundred Years...*) was staged at the theatre Vanemuine in Tartu. It was built up on several episodes and images taken from the famous novel *A Hundred Years of Solitude*, of Gabriel García Márquez. (The stage version was directed by Henrik Toompere, Jr.). I do not think García Márquez would have any objections to the fact that during a season or two at an Estonian theatre and in Estonian a dramatic work inspired by his novel would be staged. (It is possible that he has not been even aware of it). However, if one would wish to publish the work of Hussar as a book or make a film on its basis – i.e. if premises would be created for spreading the work outside Estonia –, I doubt if it could be done without stumbling against the restrictions settled by copyright.

"Liberation battle" of translation theory in poststructuralism

In her description of the "liberation battle" of modern translation theory, Camps proceeds directly from the 17th century to post-structuralism. In the background of some opinions about translation pronounced by Harold Bloom, Jacques Derrida and Paul de Man, Camps refers to the most important conclusions of the Brazilian translation school. She associates the "re-configuration of the intra-code" of Haroldo de Campos with the notion of *reine Sprache* in Walter Benjamin, something that, according to Benjamin, original work and translation share. Benjamin's *Umdichtung* corresponds approximately to the notion of *transcriação* (*transcreation*) in Campos. Camps stresses also that Benjamin as well as Campos considered translation operation as provisory and tentative.

It would be difficult not to agree with such positions. Rather, such conclusions – either explicit or inedited, contained in the work of the great majority of experienced translators – have matured long before Benjamin, Campos, Bloom, Derrida or De Man.

The problem concerns rather the sign by which different languages and cultures have denoted the creative act of translation and

also the fact that more than often there have been attempts to represent all species of translation under a unique and uniform sign.

The influence of the Indo-European linguistic-"centric" pattern on the modeling of theory

All the above mentioned philosophers and theoreticians depart from the Indo-European cultural space. In English, the creative act in question is called *translation*, in French, *traduction*, in Spanish, *traducción*, in Portuguese, *traduccão*, in Italian, *traduzione*. In all the cases the word is derived from Latin, in which the corresponding stem-words mean "translation" *(translatus)* and "transduction" *(traduco)*. The notion inevitably instills in those using it an impression that it is possible to translate, transfer or trans-duct something from one language to another in its wholeness or integrity.

Naturally, since the oldest times it has been evident, parting from translation practice, that it would never be possible to transfer from one language and culture to another complicated texts, like for instance, poetic texts. Hence, the well-known Italian saying, based on the phonetic affinity of words: *traduttore – traditore*. Yet even this saying has its proper ring only in Romance languages, as part of the Indo-European linguistic family.

It is true that German uses its own autochthonous word to denote translation, *übersetzung, übersetzen*. It is, however, a literal translation of the Latin word, and thus, does not imply any novelty. The same is true of Russian: *perevod* means exactly the same as *transduction*.

All the above mentioned theoreticians reveal faithfulness to their *own* mother language, no one seems to suspect that in some languages alien to the great Indo-European family the sign by which the creative act of translation is denoted can be different and, thus, embrace varying shades of meaning.

In Estonian, my native language – belonging to the family of Finno-Ugric languages – a term imitated from German was used in older times: *ümberpanemine* (a compound word analogous with *übersetzung*). Nonetheless, quite early, when the first translations of

belles-lettres appeared in Estonian (the second half of the 19th century), a different word was introduced, to denote the act of translation: *tõlkimine*, of which the abbreviated form is *tõlge*. In all probability, the word proceeds from Russian, because *tolk* in Russian means "opinion", "discourse", "explication". In colloquial Estonian, the same word coincides exactly with the word in Russian: *tolk* means "understanding", "reason". The Russian verb *tolkovat'* means "to interpret", "to explain". Thus, in Estonian *tõlkimine* (translation) and *tõlgendamine* (interpretation) are inseparable terms, their semantic field is characterized by an ample intersection.

What do I want to say? That my mother tongue reveals more realism, as regards the act of translation, than most of the Indio-European languages I know. It alludes to translation as interpretation, an act that admits a plurality and relativity of points of view. The target of poststructuralist criticism disappears in it: every concrete act of translation can only be an interpretation, and the result is just a version of the original work. Nothing to be disputed about.

Naturally, there is room also in Indo-European languages for shades and differences. Thus, while in English *version* can hardly be applied in the sense of *translation*, in Spanish *versión* y *traducción* have become synonyms. In Finnish, another Finno-Ugric language, the word denoting translation is *käännös*, a derivate of *kääntää* ("to turn", i.e. the same as the stem of "version").

Thus the philosophy of "other's" language undermines post-structuralist theory, derived from the pattern of its "own" language. Or at least it demonstrates a relativity of conclusions that depart exclusively from one's "own" linguistic space.

As Camps shows in her article, some elements of language philosophy can also be noted in Haroldo de Campos's theoretical discourse. Thus, he has defined translation as a "meta-function" of literature and as *ficcionalidade de segundo grau* (second-grade or second-level fictionality). Here one can observe the influence of the Greek language, in which translation is denoted by the word *μεταφραση* (meta-phrase), which literally would mean "post-phrase" or "post-expression".

In fact, it does not imply any great novelty. I do not think any experienced translator of poetry would interpret his/her versions of

rhymed poetry beyond the notions a "post-poems" or "poetic imitations". Quite surely he/she would not dare to qualify his/her mediation as an integral "translation", "transposition" or "transduction" of the work from one language to another.

Sexualization of translation theory

The sexualization of the act of translation can be observed in Chapter 2 of Camps's article, "Translation is a subversive (re)writing". Also in this case the discourse departs exclusively from the "centric"-Indo-European thinking and language. Camps refers to the witty saying by Nicolas Perrot D'Ablancourt (2nd half of the 17th century), *les belles infidèles* (unfaithful beauties), which supposedly reflects the "unfaithfulness" of translations in their relation with original works.

Next Camps refers to a metaphor of George Steiner about the translator as a man obsessed by the erotic desire of possessing the original work (a woman), as well as to some of the statements by Jacques Derrida, as regards translation, about the hymen as the "border of virginity". It is inevitable to break it, in the same way as a translation destroys the integrity of the original work.

As a novel addition to translation theory on part of the Brazilian school, Camps mentions "cannibalism", an image adapted to the act of translation by Oswald de Andrade. According to the opinion of Else Vieira, a "cannibalistic" act of translation means a confluence of the original work and the translation, a bi-directional flow in which relations of power between the source and the object cease to exist (Camps 2005: 103–104).

Unfortunately, all these beautiful metaphors loose some of their brilliance as soon as we leave the "first" ("centric", Indo-European) linguistic-cultural space, to enter the space of the "other". Thus in Finno-Ugric languages, including Estonian, the category of gender does not exist. In other words, nouns do not have a gender, while articles, either masculine or feminine, do not exist. Hence, words and discourses do not carry any firm and definite meanings. In Estonian one could apply the saying *les belles infidèles*, without any diffe-

rence, to the original work or the translation. Not only can the translation be unfaithful, but also the original work can refuse to yield to one translator and, on the contrary, in an "act of unfaithfulness", to yield to another.

In Estonian, the noun *mees* (man) has never been the synonym of "human being", as it occurs in most Indo-European languages. To denote "human being" we have another noun: *inimene* (*ihminen*, in Finnish). Why should we then make the translator act, as Steiner has suggested, under a male sign? In Estonia, some of the most outstanding translators have been women. I would limit myself to mentioning only a few of them, who excelled already in the 1930s. For instance, Marta Sillaots, the author of the Estonian version of Thomas Mann's *Der Zauberberg*, and Aita Kurfeldt, our merited translator of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.[3]

The interpretation of "hymen" by Derrida tends to be situated in the field of theology. In the same way as the breaking of "hymen" and the possession (through violation) of the original work is at the same time inevitable and impossible, one can claim that all human existence is an acrobatics on the fragile border between the inevitable and the impossible. I do not think the discourse of Derrida has introduced any transcendent idea to understand specifically the act of translation.

The obsession of the linguistic-"centric" pattern

It seems to be certain that poststructuralist theories (including the feminist "gender studies") have been strongly influenced by the "centric"-Indo-European linguistic pattern, starting from the very fact that in this broad linguistic-cultural space God has been unambiguously determined by the masculine grammatical gender. The same is true of "author", "creator" and other synonyms of God.

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[3] I have described more thoroughly the great merits of both woman translators in a longer essay in Estonian, "Maailmakirjandus Eestis. Vahendajad: nähtavuse ja nähtamatuse arhetüübid", („World Literature in Estonia. Mediators: The Archetypes of Visibility and Invisibility"), in my book *Tõrjumatu äär*, Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2005, pp. 366–368.

As translation, on the contrary, is defined by feminine gender, it is easy to "translate" the revolt against the male God / Author into the language of feminist philosophy. In contrast with God, nature (*natura*, *nature*) can be defined without ambiguity in terms of feminine characteristics.

The Finno-Ugric languages, which in this case represent the "other", on the contrary, *de-sexualize* the translation complex, deprive it from sexual fecundation. Therefore, discussion on the ground of a battle between sexes loses its meaning. Neither God nor nature has a grammatical gender in Finno-Ugric languages. Even if it can be added mentally, both entities preserve in any case their relative and fluctuating meaning.

I am not very sure if the "cannibalistic" conception means any essential addition to the ideas contained in the discourses of Michel Foucault, post-structuralism and new sociology. It would be extremely difficult to understand how from a cannibalistic act of violence a "two-way flow" could emerge, as Else Vieira has imagined. Of course, in the psychoanalytical cue there will be always an ample margin for speculating about how a cannibal after digesting the "other" obtains something of the latter's energy, race, spirit, etc. In the same vein one can imagine that a cannibal, after a rite of anthropophagy, is never the same as before, but becomes "newly fecundated", supplied with a new power and potentiality.

However, it seems to me that a "cannibalistic" philosophy in cultural discussion would suit best big nations whose biological basis has been secured and who are not menaced by extinction. In the world at the beginning of the 21st century, "cannibalism" as a cultural metaphor would fit above all to characterize acculturation. When cannibal swallows his victim, it obviously means the end of the existence of the latter (the "other"). In any case, in the rite of anthropophagy the physically and corporally mightier gets the best part.

Camps refers to Pilar Godayol who has claimed that the Eurocentrism and its cultural tradition finds itself anthropophagized, or cannibalized, by the translator, and assimilated into the target literature. (Camps 2005: 105). On the contrary, my impression is that even though the Brazilian theorists can imagine themselves as

"cannibals" who assimilate, "translate" Western poststructuralism in their "own", in reality they themselves appear as engulfed by the Grand Cannibal or, the poststructuralist deconstruction engendered in Paris. They do not really abandon the "centric"-cultural paradigm, but rather limit themselves to imitating it, "rewriting" it in an "alien" language, with local and exotic accents.

As a poet, I do not reject at all the use of metaphors in literary and cultural criticism. On the contrary, my opinion is that philosophy and literary theory can gain a lot, when creative personalities take part in discussions. The "primary" and the "secondary" creation intertwine in an intrinsic and intensive way in the field of literature. A poet's sensibility can allow the critic to touch creative process from "inside", help him/her to avoid simplified judgments about literature into which "scientific objectivity" (especially on sociological grounds) can easily slip. Objectivity in literary research is, in my opinion, rather a symbiosis of visions from "outside" and "inside".

Yet as a poet I am also aware of the fact that one metaphor can differ greatly from another in the subtlety and exactness by which it enlightens and intensifies reality. What forbids me to consider "anthropophagy" or "cannibalism" as successful metaphors about the act and the process of translation is that the first impression evoked by this image is the destruction of the "other". A "two-way flow" cannot emerge if the (culturally) weaker is destroyed. To sustain that something of the "other" would continue its existence in the "first" (the mightier) would rather correspond to the ideological-cultural vocabulary of totalitarian states and globalizers, in the sense of suppressing and annihilating individual cultures of the world. The "other" as a living and existing individual and individuality would, no doubt, contradict it.

To make the translator "visible"

In her article Camps emphasizes the need to make the translator "visible". Following the ideas of Barthes and Foucault, who coincide in their claim that the author and his/her work are created above all metatexts, Camps considers it unjust that often little if any attention

has been paid to the translator of a work, or that even the translator's name has been omitted in a translated work, that translators are badly paid, etc.

I can only agree with this opinion. Indeed, it is so, especially as regards the translation of belles-lettres. At the same time one has to accept another fact: to all probability poets, creators of original texts are nowhere in the world paid according to their cultural merits (save perhaps the Scandinavian countries). And, in the way of irony: in the EU structures a whole army of practical translators have settled, who for translating official documents, now about fishing herring, now about raising cows, gain much more money than any living writer of Eastern Europe or Latin America residing in his/her home-country.

Very seldom the "visibility" of a translator can be achieved on the exclusive basis of the translated text, however creative it is. One could rather say that in the majority of cases, when translation is bad, the translated text betrays the presence of the translator. It concerns above all excessively direct transferences from the original language to the target language. The strangeness in the use of the language makes the reader to reject it: he/she does not feel it as good literary work that could be enjoyed in his/ her native language.

The translator becomes also "visible" (often in the negative sense) in the case of simplifying and abbreviated adaptations of the original work. An educated reader knows that the original of *Don Quixote*, for instance, is not a text of merely a hundred pages. If such a *Don Quixote* appears in his/her native language, s/he understands immediately that what is offered to him/her is not the original work of Cervantes. The translator has stripped him/herself of any coverture.

I admit that many adaptations of this kind, made with a due talent and meant above all for children, have accomplished and are accomplishing worthily their cultural mission. Thus abbreviated adaptations of original works are an iterative and common phenomenon in young cultures, as was the case of Estonian culture at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. In those times the first adaptations in Estonian, via third languages, were made of *Don Quixote*, *Robinson Crusoe* and other important works of world literature. It was inevitable, as we did not have in

those times translators capable of mediating these works into Estonian in their integrity.

It is neither scandalous or contradicting "high culture" when ancient poetical texts, written in an archaic language, are adapted into modern prose. Such contemporization becomes often unavoidable, because it would be hardly possible to ignore an important factor, that is the reception capacity of the modern reader. Thus it is natural that, for instance, Estonian university students become aware of ancient Germanic songs about Nibelungs on the basis of verse translations of the poetic *Edda* (1970) and *Nibelungenlied* (1977), made by the outstanding Estonian translator Rein Sepp. At the same time, it is by no means contemptible that the wider reading public, including school-children, learn something of the same story from modern prose versions, like the one made of *Nibelngenlied* by Franz Fühmann, a 20th-century German writer. Of Fühmann's prose version we too have an Estonian translation, made in 1983 by Mati Sirkel.

The experience of Estonian cultural history, starting from the 1920s and 1930s, shows, however, that the cultivated adult reading public in its great majority presupposes that it is not offered, to use a Spanish popular saying, "a cat instead of a hare". It means that the public still expects to read integral translations, as complete a possible. At least since the second half of the 20th century even translations made via third languages have not been held in high esteem in Estonia. In fact, in the cultural practice of the Soviet period examples abound of how Estonian literature was translated into other languages from their translations into Russian. It was often impossible to identify, on the basis of the target language, the source texts or even their authors.

Translators as synthetic-creative personalities

The visibility of a translator in the positive sense is guaranteed above all by his/her attitude towards a determined culture. Thus those who have excelled as writers or creative personalities in other fields, are in favorable conditions to become "visible" as translators.

In my opinion it has been a great fortune for Estonian culture that the immense majority of our translators of fundamental works of world literature have been and are still in our days "creative-synthetic personalities". In the first forty years of the 20th century they laid the basis for a tradition that has reached uninterruptedly the present day. Ants Oras, one of our most important essayists and literary critics, took up the task of translating Shakespeare. The work of Walt Whitman was first translated by Johannes Semper, a poet, essayist and novelist, and then by Boris Kabur, an author of plays for children. The narrative work of Chekhov and *Seven Brothers* of the Finn Aleksis Kivi were translated by Friedebert Tuglas, one of the most important Estonian masters of short prose. Of Goethe's *Faust* we have two different translations, one made in exile by the above mentioned Ants Oras, and another, made in Estonia by the poet August Sang. Our novelist Marta Sillaots translated into Estonian some of the most important works of Thomas Mann and Fyodor Dostoevsky. Even though Aita Kurfeldt, the translator of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* and García Márquez's *A Hundred Years of Solitude*, was not a writer, she was a ballet dancer, researched folklore and already before WWII wrote and published in Estonian a monograph about the work of Cervantes. The translations of Edgar Allan Poe's short narratives became famous, because they were used by Johannes Aavik, one of our greatest linguists, as a vehicle for introducing into our language abundant neologisms created with exceptional talent.

Almost without exception, Estonian translators of the essential part of world poetry have been poets. Or if not, they have excelled by their original work in other genres (thus, the already mentioned Ants Oras, translator of the poetry of Shelley, Poe, Byron, Goethe, Heine and others). The list of such translators would be large.

Translator = author?

The Brazilian theorists, whose ideas are resumed by Camps, seem to assert that a translator who creatively mediates a work should be considered the author of the work in his/her full rights.

Even though I admit unconditionally the principle of creativeness in all literary translation, I would still allude to obvious limits as regards the aspiration of the translator to become "visible" in the same degree as the author of the original work, or even more. Everything depends on the purpose established by the creator of the metatext (post-text). If s/he wants to transfer from one language to another what Benjamin denominated as *reine Sprache*, that is, the philosophical image and the essential style of the original work, I can hardly imagine the translator presenting the result of the mediating operation under his/her name, as the (principal) author of it, and much less so, not mentioning the author from whose work the translation/adaptation had departed.

I am of course fully aware that many poets have included in their original books of poetry their poetic translations. Still, in the large majority of such cases, the origin and the author of "arch-texts", i. e. the source of the "meta-poems", have been mentioned.

My own poetical sensibility does not approve of sustaining in such a way my original poetical work. If the principal image and content of a poem have been created by an author belonging to another culture and language, however excelling my translation, by no means I could present myself in a role other than the author of translation or poetic imitation (interpretation). It is true, for instance, that in my Estonian translations of Calderón's *La vida es sueño* (1999) and Tirso de Molina's *El burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra* (2006) I have abandoned the metrical forms of the original work and have translated them into Estonian in free and blank verse, respectively. I do not think the essence of the dramatic work of Calderón or Tirso de Molina resides in the metrics and verse forms they used. Without any doubt, in Estonian these works are "my Calderón" and "my Tirso de Molina". Yet they are not mine in the degree that would allow me to present the work of these two Spanish "Golden Age" dramatic geniuses to the Estonian public as my original work.

Let me mention a polemical case in this respect. Our contemporary German writer Hans Magnus Enzensberger published in 1992 his theatrical adaptation of Calderón's drama *La hija del aire* (Daughter of the Air). On the cover of the book one can read in large

letters: *HANS MAGNUS ENZENSBERGER. DIE TOCHTER DER LUFT.*[4] It is true that in small letters it has been added: *Ein Schauspiel. Nach dem Spanischen des Calderon de la Barca.* As it is explained in the annotation of the work, Enzensberger has followed "the ingenious structure of Calderón's drama", but at the same time has reduced the Baroque apparatus and conventional rhetoric of the original work, as well as has abbreviated it – let us remind that Calderón's work is in two parts –, to make it better presentable on the stage of our days.

The case bares some resemblance with the already mentioned adaptation of García Márquez's novel for the Estonian stage. However, there are two important differences. Enzensberger's adaptation has been published as a book and, besides, in one of the most widely used languages of Western Europe. Should we imagine Calderón – who left life more than three centuries ago – as a living author of our days, the "creative translation act" could hardly have permitted Enzensberger to appear as the author of the work. Its publication in the present form would have proved impossible altogether.

As a matter of fact, I suspect that in this case we do not have to do with "cannibalism" (as a translation philosophy), but rather with an act of "anthropophagy" shaded by commercial factors. Germany is one of the few countries of the world were the name of Calderón (still) might be known to the most cultivated part of the reading or theatre public. Nevertheless, the teaching of world literature in German universities and high schools, to my knowledge, has become rather fragmented. It is quite possible that as a "brand", our contemporary Enzensberger would be better known by an ampler circle of German readers than the "old" Spanish Calderón. This fact in itself seems to "justify" the hierarchy of the authors' names on the cover of *Die Tochter der Luft*.

I still guess that the adaptation made by Enzensberger of Calderón's work is rather exceptional. In most works whose translators have been outstanding modern writers, their original author is been duly visible and acknowledged. Besides, literary translation between two different natural languages, within the same

[4] Cf. http://images-eu.amazon.com/images/P/3518404296.03.LZZZZZZZ.gif

genre, can hardly be compared with the "translation" of a dramatic work or a novel for the use of theatre or cinema. The language of these artistic genres is different, hence, the necessity for a thorough modification of the original work.

Thus the "visibility" of the translator seldom has its source in the translated work as such. Rather, the translation becomes "visible" thanks to the position occupied in culture by the translator as a creative personality. In the cases when *reine Sprache* or the image-nucleus of the original work, in the course of its transference into another language and culture has suffered a severe contamination or has been intentionally destroyed, it is obvious that the talk does not go any more about the operation traditionally called "translation", but about the creation of a new work which to greater or smaller extent has been sustained by the image system of the original work (it is the case of parodies, pastiches, etc).

Towards a symbiotic philosophy of translation. Under the sign of androgyny

Contrary to cultural metaphors that since poststructuralism – supported by often dubious arguments – have aimed at constructing an antagonism of sexes in the complex of translation, symbiotic translation philosophy confers to the original work and the translation a quality of sovereign and mutually fecundating creative acts. Similarly, such philosophy understands translation as a plurality of interpretations.

The symbiotic philosophy recommends to enrich the "centric" discourse with conclusions about translation that could originate from historical and modern culture of the "other", its language and its way of perceiving reality. If the Indo-European discourse about translation fails to construct itself without sexual fecundation, symbiotic philosophy recommends to rely, instead of sexual contraposition, on the image of "androgyny". The latter could symbolize an essential equality between the masculine and the feminine gender, as well as their mutually enriching inter-dynamics

in all creative act, be it the creation of an original work or a translation.

The historical translation practice, in whose conclusions and experience translation philosophy should centre all its attention, would demonstrate an intense and extensive intertwinement of "visibility" and "invisibility" in translation process. Besides outstanding writers and philosophers who have dedicated themselves to translation (Quevedo, Shelley, Goethe, Schopenhauer, Borges, Camus, to mention only a few), one should not forget the main legion of translators that historically has consisted of numberless "less visible", but not at all less talented creative spirits who above all "invisibly" – I very much agree with Assumpta Camps, often deprived of due acknowledgement – have sustained the great canon of world literature in the shape we know it at present.

In both species of the creative act – in original work and translation – symbiotic philosophy emphasizes, instead of cannibalism – with its sub-signs of violence, rape, swallowing and digestion – the principle of love. The coexistence of soul and body in love, metaphorically "translated" into the act of translation, is the best guarantee for the continuation of creative translation process in the times to come.

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On Ants Oras, the Invisible Translator

REET SOOL

In keeping with the cosmopolitan spirit of the Ants Oras international symposium held in Tallinn in January 26, 2007, "The Cosmopolitan Message of Ants Oras", I would like to quote from Charles Baudelaire's *New Notes on Edgar Poe, Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe,* published in March 1857, eight years after Poe's death, as the introduction to the second volume of Poe translations published by Edition Garnier. The English version comes from the City Lights Books publication entitled *The Unknown Poe, an anthology of fugitive writings by Edgar Allan Poe, with appreciations by Charles Baudelaire, Stephane Mallarmé, Paul Valéry, J.K. Huysmans & André Breton,* edited and translated by Raymond Foye (1980). Baudelaire writes the following: "/ . . . / and a translation of poetry so deliberate, so concentrated, can be a soothing dream, but it is only a dream. Poe wrote little poetry; he sometimes expressed regret not to be able to devote himself, not just more often, but exclusively, to the kind of work he considered noblest. But his poetry is always powerful in impact. It is not the fervent effusions of Byron, nor the soft, harmonious, and distinguished melancholy of Tennyson, for whom, moreover, he had a semi-fraternal admiration. It is something profound and dazzling like a dream, mysterious and perfect like a crystal." (Baudelaire 1980: 106) Note that Baudelaire compares translating Poe's poetry to "a soothing dream", but "*only* a dream" (my emphasis), yet has himself engaged in this "dreaming". T.S. Eliot, however, in his insightful and intriguing essay, "From Poe to Valéry" admits wisely: "Now, we all of us like to believe that we understand our own poets better than any foreigner can do; but I think we should be prepared to entertain the possibility that these

Frenchmen [Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Valéry] have seen something in Poe that English-speaking readers have missed." (Eliot 1962: 627)

Within the context of our Estonian culture, we might, come to think of it, also entertain a possibility like that, especially where Ants Oras is concerned. Interestingly, and also quite amusingly, Eliot attributes the French admiration of Poe to their imperfect knowledge of the English language. Writes he: "We must first take account of the fact that none of these poets knew the English language very well. Baudelaire must have read a certain amount of English and American poetry: he certainly borrows from Gray, and apparently from Emerson. He was never familiar with England, and there is no reason to believe that he spoke the language at all well. As for Mallarmé, he taught English and there is convincing evidence of his imperfect knowledge, for he committed himself to writing a kind of guide to the use of the language. An examination of this curious treatise, and the strange phrases which he gives under the impression that they are familiar English proverbs, should dispel any rumour of Mallarmé's English scholarship. As for Valéry, I never heard him speak a word of English, even in England. I do not know what he had read in our language: Valéry's second language, the influence of which is perceptible in some of his verse, was Italian." (Eliot 1962: 633)

In short, what Eliot basically says here is that the French poets overrated Poe because of their imperfect knowledge of English. He concedes at once, though: "It is certainly possible, in reading something in a language imperfectly understood, for the reader to find what is not there; and when the reader is himself a man of genius, the foreign poem read may, by a happy accident, elicit something important from the depths of his own mind, which he attributes to what he reads. And it is true that in translating Poe's prose into French, Baudelaire effected a striking improvement: he transformed what is often a slipshod and a shoddy English prose into admirable French. Mallarmé, who translated a number of Poe's poems into French prose, effected a similar improvement: but on the other hand, the rhythms, in which we find so much of the originality of Poe, are lost." (Eliot 1962: 633)

Ants Oras, though seemingly absent in the context of the above quotations, and thus in a way invisible as the title of this article

suggests, has in fact been present via Eliot and Poe from the start, both as a scholar and translator. To paraphrase D.H. Lawrence in his famous *Studies in Classic American Literature,* 1924: "But the point is Oras" (Lawrence said: "But the point is Poe" (Lawrence 1961: 332). In terms of translating, then, could any of what Eliot suggested in connection with the French poets apply to Oras as well? What about his knowledge of English? Considering his Oxford background, let us dismiss any doubts of the imperfect knowledge part of Eliot's reasoning. Fortunately, Oras did not "commit himself to writing a kind of guide to the use of the language" either, so that could not possibly be held against him. But the second assumption, seeing something in a poem written in a foreign language that the native speakers might have missed is quite possible, the more so in literary scholarship as the international (limited, of course) interest in Oras' work testifies – one of the first scholars to visit the University of Tartu in early 1990s was Professor David Reibel from Universität Tübingen, (the University of Tübingen), doing research on Milton, and specifically interested in Ants Oras' work in this field. Concerning the possibility of effecting "a striking improvement", of which Baudelaire speaks referring to Mallarmé, this possibility, to me, seems highly improbable, although claims of that kind have been made in Estonia, too, in connection with Oras' translations of Poe, for example: " . . . nõnda on tõlge kõlaliselt algupärandeist isegi parem" ("Päevaleht", 1932 – ". . . thus the translation ["The Bells" as "Kellad" by Ants Oras] is sound-wise even better than the originals.")

By and large, such statements are quite common in our press, put down for the purpose of praising the translator (importantly, the translator, and not the translation, since the focus is always on the person, not the piece of art), but praise of that sort should, in my opinion, be treated with caution, since "improvement" means change, and change means distortion of the original, for whatever purpose in whatever direction or mode. As far as current journalistic criticism in Estonia goes, it is predominantly author-centered, aimed to put the author in the limelight, and often entirely ignoring the work itself. The invisibility I was having in mind while choosing the title for this article, a modification of "The Invisible Poet: T.S. Eliot" by Hugh Kenner (1959), was the kind that highlights the "words on

the page" rather than the author, even less the translator. In short, the shift from the 19th-century romantic notion of the nature of art as the expression of the writer to the foregrounding of the work of art itself, a formalist approach, to put it in a nutshell (T.S. Eliot, New Criticism, other formalist schools.) Today, though often viewed as an anachronism, we must still regards it as an important stage in the history of literary theory and criticism. Neither should we forget the fact that Oras' formative years coincided with the spread of this mode of criticism, T.S. Eliot the "impersonal poet", "a master of the anonymous", according to Marianne Moore, but also "the invisible assistant editor of *The Egoist*" (v. Kenner 1959: ix–xi). Characteristically, it is the ideas of Eliot that was the subject of Oras' book entitled *The Critical Ideas of T.S Eliot,* Tartu, 1932.

However, I had also another kind of invisibility in mind, a tragic one, when considering the title of this paper – the practice of blotting out the names of the translators who were regarded as politically "dangerous" by the Soviet authorities. Not only were the names of the translators blotted out on the title pages of the books, but from the minds of generations of young readers, not to mention the physical extermination of Estonian writers and their books (thrashing those into pulp). Ants Oras has written the following: "It is he [the poet in exile] who is expected to bridge the sombre vacuum in the intellectual history of his nation: when the period of slavery ends, as it must, it will be his contribution that will have to fill the yawning gap." (Oras 1955:8) "The period of slavery", however, lasted for nearly half a century, and the "yawning gap" is still there, though filled to a certain extent from the 1990s onward. As it happens, when teaching American literature to big classes of students (about 140 last term), the mentioning of Ants Oras' name draws blank glances. The same is true of, say, Henrik Visnapuu. The 'poetae in exilio' (as well as Ants Oras) have never been part of their formative years, and their sensibilities have been affected (or numbed) by voices that were sifted through harsh or somewhat slackened censorship, as the case might have been. The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics claims: "From the Second World War up to the 1960s, which led to the Sovietization of Estonia, only the refugees were able to write freely and produce real art." (1993: 383) It must be added that in this context the 1960s probably mark the completion of the

process of Sovietization of Estonia in general, and the beginning of the period of the so-called Khrushchev "thaw", short-lived as it was, after which the political censorship tightened its grip again, as the Brezhnev era set in. The vagueness of the concept of "real art" aside, it should be added at this point that the writers that survived the Stalinist repressions but did not comply with the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, could technically write their work (i.e. "produce real art" if they were talented) but were not allowed to publish it. Which is to say that as writers they were nonexistent or invisible, as were, of course, the writers in exile. The Soviet authorities regarded it a criminal offense to read and circulate the work of the latter. The change that took place in Oras' post-war publications (to mention only the books) is eloquent in itself and could be summarized thus: from Shelley to Siberia, e.g. On Some Aspects of Shelley's Poetic Imagery (Tartu, 1938) to Baltic Eclipse (London, 1948), translated into Swedish (Slagskugga over Baltikum, Stockholm, 1948), Norwegian (Mørke over Baltikum, Oslo, 1948), Icelandic (Örlagsnótt yfir Eystrasaltslöndum, Rejkjavik, 1955), and Finnish, to end the sad cycle, in an enlarged form as Viron kohtalonvuodet (Jyväskylä, 1958), to be followed by the survey of Baltic literatures in Italian (jointly with E. Blese and A. Senn), Storia delle Letterature Baltiche (Milano, 1957) – (v. Estonian Poetry and Language. Studies in Honor of Ants Oras 1965: 13–14).

The list of his essays and articles of the same period is likewise depressing: Deportations in Estonia. Baltic Review I and II (1947 and 1948), The Sovietization of a University, London Times Educational Supplement, 1948, Soviet Policy in Estonia, The Third Force, 1949. None of the publications were available in his enslaved homeland at the time, and a long time after it, maybe not ever. He was a persona non grata here, invisible and voiceless. One of the various meanings of the verb 'translate' is "to change from one form, function, or state to another, convert or transform", as in "translate ideas into reality" – the sort of tragic 'translation' that befell our homeland.

We could ask, then, what does it mean to translate? To render in another language, one would think, to restate words from one language into another language, as, say, "G. Kajak. Georg Eduard Luiga, Johannes Aavik and Ants Oras have rendered "The Raven" by

E.A. Poe into Estonian." However, when we say that "Poetry often does not translate" or "Poe's tales translate well into Estonian", we mean that they are translatable, or translatable in a certain way. Of the various meanings of the verb 'to translate', the one that means "to put into simpler terms; explain or interpret" and "to express in different words, to paraphrase" are also important in this connection, e.g. "Is there a need to translate the critic's remarks?", meaning, to express the highly learned jargon of the critic in simple and less technical language.

But we should also keep in mind the concept of Heidegger about every translation (*Übersetzen*) being an interpretation (*Auslegen*) and vice versa (Heidegger 1984: 74–76), and that this kind of translation-interpretation is needed within one's mother tongue as well. One would think it is especially important in poetry and philosophy, in domains that deal with saying and thinking about what is, about being. In his work *Heraklit*, Heidegger views each translation as a half-measure, as makeshift, which in certain cases, as in translating business documents, could easily solve the problem, since both parties understand what is being meant, and sometimes only too well. In translating Heraclitus' word, however, translation becomes *trans*location to the other bank, which is hardly known, and lies beyond the wide flowing river. It is easy to go astray there and such attempts mostly end in a shipwreck. In this field of translation, as Heidegger sees it, all translations are very poor or less poor, yet poor nevertheless. Translations in the realm of the high word of poetry and thinking require interpretation, since both poetry and philosophy are interpretations themselves. Such translations, then, can either introduce one into the interpretation, or else they may complete this. But the kind of translation that completes Heraclitus' word must inevitably leave it as obscure as the original. (v. Heidegger 1994: 44–45)

In this connection it is interesting to note that in Poe's lifetime no translations of his by now most well-known poem "The Raven" (1845) appeared. Instead, there were rumours that this poem itself was either largely or in part a translation, 'plagiarized' from Italian, Chinese, Persian, etc. In addition, more than a dozen imitations of it circulated while Poe was still alive.

Ants Oras, in his introduction to the 1931 edition of "Edgar Allan Poe. Valik luuletisi ja essee "Kaarna" tekkimisest ("A Selection of Poems and the Essay About the Genesis of "The Raven"), as the title page has it – the essay itself appears under its original title as "Loomingu filosoofia" ("The Philosophy of Composition") in this book, published by Eesti Kirjanduse Seltsi Kirjastus – the Publishing House of the Estonian Literary Society, a polished essay of 13 pages, devotes less than one page to his own way of translating Poe, his own "philosophy of translation", preferring to remain in the shadow – invisible, instead. He comments briefly and modestly that this booklet ("vihk") was born mostly on "o n e strong impulse" within a couple of weeks" – "Käesoleva vihu kohta tuleb kõigepäält märkida, et see on suuremalt osalt sündinud ü h e tugeva impulse mõjul, nii et pea kõik Poe tähtsamad luuletised olid tõlgitud paari nädala jooksul." (Poe 1931: 16) He had modified these translations later but complains that it was difficult to recapture the earlier mood to the full extent. Hence we could infer that the one strong impulse, whatever it was, was crucial for the translator in his work, and it could be re-evoked to some extent, but not in full. He elaborates further: "Tõlked tahavad kõigepäält olla l u u l e t i s e d, mis annavad edasi Poe meeleolu ja muusika, ühtlasi pidades tema sõnastusest kinni nii palju kui võimalik, kuid hoidudes pedantsusest. Tõlkija on Poe värsitoodangu omal individuaalsel moel läbi elanud ja neid elamusi paratamatult pidanud väljendama ka oma eestindustes. Ometigi arvab ta, et on olnud üldiselt täpsam kas või sellistest nimekaist Poe ümbervalajaist teistesse keeltesse nagu Konstantin Balmont või Hedwig Lachmann. Puht-filoloogiliseks ta ei saanud oma ülesannet pidada, sellele vaatamata, et on hariduselt filoloog. Sellise närvide luule "teaduslikud" tõlked on senini tavaliselt äpardunud. Ka tõlkida tuleb närvidega. Kuivõrra see käesoleval korral õnnestunud, jäägu teiste otsustada." Signed, TÕLKIJA/ TRANSLATOR (in capital letters – ibid. 16–17).[1]

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[1] "The translations aspire, above all, to be p o e m s that convey Poe's mood and music, while following his wording as closely as possible, striving to avoid pedantry. The translator has experienced Poe's poetry in his own individual way, and as a result, was inevitably compelled to express these sensations in his Estonian renderings. However, he still thinks that he has been more exact than such well-known translators of Poe as Konstantin Balmont or Hedwig

Oras obviously echoes Baudelaire here: "Poe was a writer of nerves, and of much more – and the best writer I know." (Baudelaire 1980: 90) He makes it quite clear in his essay by claiming: "Poe luule on täiesti neurootiline luule." (Poe 1931: 11) – "Poe's poetry is entirely neurotic poetry". Once written "with nerves", it has to be translated "with nerves" as well. His own formulation "One has to translate with nerves, too" is a strong one, stating clearly that this is what he did, hence reference to his incapability of recapturing the original mood that made him translate most of the poems in the collection, to begin with. Johannes Silvet, Estonian scholar and lexicographer, has written an interesting scholarly article, "Edgar A. Poe' "Kaaren" kolmes eestikeelses tõlkes" (Eesti Kirjandus No 6, 1930) – "'The Raven' by Edgar A. Poe in Three Estonian Translations," viewing the renditions of G. E.Luiga, Johannes Aavik and Ants Oras, particularly the last two (v. also Sool 1988: 77–87). Silvet considered "The Raven" principally as an "interesting experiment" ("on (...) huvitavaks eksperimendiks"), of which the "texture, the technical side" ("just 'kude', just tehniline külg") mattered most, comparing it to "solving a difficult crossword puzzle" ("raske ristsõnamõistatuse lahendamine") as the main attraction for translators. (v. Silvet 1930: 285) He stresses the introduction of neologisms in Aavik's version, something which is quite alien to Poe's usage, whose vocabulary is not large for a poet writing in English, and whose diction is rather conservative with hardly any neologisms at all (v. Asselineau 1973: 11–49). In short, Aavik has, despite Poe, used his work as a vehicle for the neologistic movement of the Estonian language. In this connection, Fr. Tuglas has remarked in an early review of Aavik's translations that "Poe sõber võitleb minus keeleuuenduse sõbraga" ("The friend of Poe in me fights with the supporter of the neologistic movement."(Tuglas 1918: 1)

By and large, Silvet praises Aavik's translation for its clarity and general understandability, while criticizing it for its certain "intellectual dryness" ("tundub (...) intellektuaalselt kuivana"), "coldness"

Lachmann. He could not regard his task as purely philological, although he is a philologist by education. The "scientific" translations of such poetry of nerves, as a rule, have so far proved to be a failure. One has to translate with nerves, too. To what extent this has succeeded in the present case, is not for the translator to decide." [Translation is mine, R. S.]

("külmana") and dull sound ("tuimakõlalisena"). (Silvet 1930: 287) He sees Oras as the very contrast to Aavik, viewing "the emotional word-music" ("tundeküllastatud sõnamuusika", ibid.) of his rendering as praiseworthy on the one hand, and as excessive on the other, often responsible for the blurring of the sense of Poe's lines. "Kaaren" ("The Raven"), according to Silvet, is an altogether more free and independent poem than the earlier versions in Estonian, yet one tending towards emotional monotony due to Oras' tendency of over-dramatization, especially by additional 'oh's and 'ah's as "primitive display of sentiment" ("primitiivsete tundeavaldistega" (ibid.: 288), and the neglect of Poe's carefully orchestrated gradation of tension throughout the poem.

To conclude this prosy review on a more poetic note, let us read a stanza by Poe ("The Conqueror Worm" from "Ligeia") as translated into Estonian by three translators: Johannes Aavik, Ants Oras and Indrek Hirv, respectively:

THE CONQUEROR WORM (from "Ligeia")
Out–out are the lights–out all!
And, over each dying form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the seraphs, all haggard and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its hero the Conqueror Worm.
(Poe 1983: 485)

VÕITJA USS (Johannes Aavik)
Kõik tuled kustund korraga
nii ylal kui ka all;
eesriie surilinana
siis langeb mühinal.
Siis ingel teatab saalile,
näos surnukahvatus,
et näidend kurbmäng "Inime"
ja sangar Võitja Uss.
(Poe 1995: 280)

VALLUTAV VAEL (Ants Oras)
Kustunud sätendav õu –
    norgund ka uhkeima kael –
eesriie sulgub – ja mürin kui kõu
    vägeval, võppuval lael;
kohkuvad inglid, sest teada neil nõu,
    mis kaaluti Faatumi vael
et sai päälkirjaks: "Saatused maapäälse tõu"
    ja et vägimees – Vallutav Vael.
(Poe 1931: 34)

VAGEL VALLUTAJA (Indrek Hirv)
Jälk madu puhkab, kere verest must.
Pilv vajub musta kirstukattena ja
tuul kannab kaugelt rasket ärevust
ja järelmängu nukrat kaja…
Parv kaameid ingleid hõljub kupli all –
sealt täidab sosin kogu maja:
on teemaks INIMENE sel tragöödial
ning kangelaseks VAGEL VALLUTAJA
(Poe 1996: 13)

Do these translations need a translation? An interpretation? The original? Are they 'Nachdichtungen'? Perhaps. To modify Ants Oras' words, this "is not for the author of the present article to decide" at this point. Instead, we could consider another detail with regard to translating, and translating names, in particular: the Estonian word 'oras' means "young green crop, braird (a word of Scottish origin), the first sprouts or shoots of grass, corn, or other crop, new growth." But the braird of 'winter rye', (autumn-sown rye – 'talirukis') waits patently under the snow, *invisibly,* to shoot up in spring, to become *visible* again – a sign of hope and new life. We could think of Ants Oras in this way, too, for his long winter is finally over.

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The Life of The Text: Translation, Betrayal and Difference

ASSUMPTA CAMPS

"Ningún problema tan consubstancial con las letras y
con su modesto misterio como el que propone una traducción"
J. L. Borges: "Las versiones homéricas", *Discusión.*

"Am Ende ist alle Poësie Übersetzung"
Novalis: *Dichter über ihre Dichtungen.*

Translation seen as marks, traces left on a palimpsest, signs of an infinite intertextual dialogue over the ages, in a creative process that enriches the original, is present in what is arguably the most provocative of all contemporary thinking on the business of translation: that of Jorge Luis Borges. In it some of the postures adopted by post-structuralist criticism and the debate concerning the metaphysics of being – elements that I wish to emphasise in this discussion – are given voice.[1] Rather than analyse Borges's standpoint on translation in its entirety, I am concerned here in showing its links with post-structuralism, and illustrating the originality and

[1] On the subject of Borges and the poststructuralist revision of the role of the translator, see Arrojo 1993. See, also, by the same author, "La reevaluación del papel del traductor en el post-estructuralismo: Nietzsche, Borges y la compleja relación entre Origen y Reproducción", Congreso Internacional "Últimas corrientes teóricas en los estudios de traducción y sus aplicaciones", Universidad de Salamanca, 17 November 2000. In Álvarez & Vidal 2000: 27–41.

innovativeness of his thinking on the subject, ideas which can be considered as having been forged by around 1930.[2]

Borges was never to forward a complete, systematic and exhaustive theory of translation. Yet, he was a translator and he dedicated some of his time to commenting on the work of various translators, and to analysing the business of translation. And both his work as a translator and his thinking concerning translation constitute a remarkably original contribution. It has frequently been noted, though perhaps not with sufficient weight, that in Borges's writings, his reflections on the act of translation and its significance impregnate a large part of his work, and even form the basis of some of his best known stories, such as "The Library of Babel" and "Pierre Menard, Author of The Quixote". Moreover, some of the leitmotivs of his writing, including the labyrinth, the library and the cosmic letter (Aleph), are closely linked to his thinking on translation. His opinions on translation are to be found dispersed among his books, although they are mainly recorded in "Las versiones homéricas",[3] "El informe de Brodie",[4] "Pierre Menard, autor del Quijote",[5] "La flor de Coleridge",[6] "Kafka y sus precursores",[7] "La memoria de Shakespeare"[8] and "Los traductores de las 1001 Noches",[9] while further references are to be found interspersed in other sources (interviews, magazine and newspaper articles, etc.), in which he expresses his opinion on the subject, including "Mis libros",[10] *Conversaciones con Borges* (Borges & Alifano 1994). *El Oficio de traducir* (Borges 1999), "Don Segundo Sombra en inglés",[11] *En*

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[2] For an exhaustive study of Borges's thinking on translation, see Kristal 2002.

[3] Borges 1989: *Discusión*, pp. 239–243.

[4] Borges1989: *El informe de Brodie*, pp. 451–456.

[5] Borges 1989. *Ficciones*, pp. 244–250.

[6] Borges 1989. *Otras inquisiciones*, pp. 17–19.

[7] Ib. 88–90.

[8] Borges 1989. *La memoria de Shakespeare*, pp. 393–399.

[9] Borges 1989. *Historia de la eternidad*, pp. 397–413.

[10] Borges 1985.

[11] Borges, J. L. 1934. – *Don Segundo Sombra* en inglés. – *Revista Multicolor de los Sábados del periódico Crítica*, 11 August, p. 5. In Zangara 1999.

diálogo (Borges & Ferrari 1998), *El otro Borges: entrevistas* (Mateo 1997) and "Las dos maneras de traducir".[12]

The story "Pierre Menard, Author of The Quixote" is perhaps one of the most acute commentaries ever to have been written on translation, as Steiner claims in his seminal work "After Babel", and for whom, moreover, all studies of translation can be no more than "commentaries on Borges's commentary" (Steiner 1984: 71), since in this story, Borges tackles what for the critic constitutes in essence "the problem of translation": "repeating an already extant book in an alien tongue" (ib.).[13] In the case of Borges's story, as is known, we are not dealing with the repetition of a work into another tongue but rather that of a novel into the same language. Yet, the mystery of the repetition is, if this is possible, even more disturbing in this task of the total translation undertaken by Menard of Cervantes's novel, and which entails the displacement of its meaning. The project, necessarily incomplete, involves ultimately an absolute mimesis: a writing of the Quixote without being Cervantes, but rather remaining as Menard, with the experiences and readings of Menard, in a subtle deferral of meaning that throws up new interpretations of the text.

In Borges's story, both Menard (obsessed by the total repetition of Cervantes) and the Quixote (which "repeats" the tales of knighthood) place us on the same plane, in their quixotic attempt, "at repeating the original meanings, which end up by denying Cervantes's role as the author, making him but a simple reader of the Quixote to the point that he is deleted from the text that Menard produces as a simulacrum".[14] An attempt, in short, which terminates

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[12] Borges, J. L. 1997. *Textos recobrados 1919–1929.* Buenos Aires: Emecé, pp. 257–258.

[13] This story is also the "inspirational muse" of Arrojo's thinking on translation, as she herself claims (Arrojo 1993: 11).

[14] Arrojo's interpretation of this story is particularly suggestive (Arrojo 1993: chap. 9). She shows us, by reference to Pierre Menard, the ambivalent nature of the act of translation, which converts the faithful translator in a perfect example of Oedipus, trapped between guilt and desire, between parricide and the anxiety to make himself invisible in his translation (that hides his intervention). As Arrojo claims, "both Menard and Don Quixote embody a drama of the transferential relationship that is hinted at between reader and text, between reading and writing, translation and original. At the heart of this drama, there is a reader or a

in the insurmountable difference between the signified and the signifier, similar to that proposed by the deconstructionists, and of which translation also constitutes a paradigm (Arrojo 1993: 157).

Taking up again Walter Benjamin's conception of translation as the survival of the original, for Borges translation constitutes a creative process that enriches the text. Thus, he subverts the traditional hierarchy seen to exist between the original and the reproduction/ translation, and which relegates the latter to a secondary status. This hierarchical inversion, by which the priority between one and the other based on the simple fact of chronological precedence is called into question, leads, eventually, to a reconsideration of the famous debate of the translator's fidelity and the widely held prejudice of likening "difference" to "a treasonous act". The idea of translation as a variation of the original, capable even of improving on it, is expressed on various occasions,[15] as well as the belief, undoubtedly arising out of his own work as a translator, that "literary translations are not literary" (Borges 1994: 80). For Borges, it is not simply a belief that a good translator can – perhaps even *should* – take the necessary liberties so as to obtain, as a final result of his efforts, a convincing *literary* work, but, he argues: translating, all things considered, is the re-creation of a work, the taking of a text as pretext.[16]

In his apologia of free translation, of adaptation or imitation, even of "collective" translation – in collaboration with his translators – or of plagiarism as a form of the tradition, Borges reveals one of the

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translator that inevitably arrives too late to be the author of the text that he desires and who, for this reason, must usurp this coveted position of author in an act of parricide for which he pays with a frequently 'invisible' sense of guilt and with an explicit declaration of self-concealment and respect for the original" (ib. 166–167; *the translation is mine* – A.C.). At this juncture, there emerges, as we can see, the condition of the text-translation as desire, which leads Arrojo to question the insights that Menard "desires" by undertaking the writing of Quixote in Borges's story. The importance of the fragments of the Quixote that Menard offers us and their links with translation have been highlighted earlier (see also Steiner).

[15] See "Mis libros", op. cit., as well as "*Don Segundo Sombra* en inglés", op. cit.

[16] See *El oficio de traducir*, op. cit.

main influences on his thinking, namely T. S. Eliot's ideas on the depersonalisation of literature manifest in *Tradition and the Individual Talent*. From this standpoint, Borges claims that the text is of greater importance than the author, in a clouding of the authorial presence that refers us tangentially to the positions defended by R. Barthes and M. Foucault when speaking of the death of the author, and he paves the way to a conception of the work as a text that is never definitive. As can be read in one of Borges's key texts on the subject, "The Homeric Versions", with which we opened this discussion, "the concept of the *definitive text* corresponds only to religion or exhaustion" (Borges 1989: I, 239). Within this idea of what we might call the "poetics of the rough drafts", which is why in the variations, revisions and rewritings of the text "there can only be rough drafts" – it matters little who the author is – the translation is seen as just another draft in the life of the text over the ages.

The idea of the permanence of a work through its translation (as a privileged form of its very dissemination), rather than translatability as an attribute of the work and the key to the survival of the original, was present already in Walter Benjamin, in one of the key texts of contemporary thinking on translation, *Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers*, published as a prologue in fact to a translation of Charles Baudelaire's *Tableaux Parisiens*, in 1923.[17] And in Benjamin's writings, as in Borges's, this subject is related to the debate between faithfulness and freedom, questioning the demand for faithfulness *à la lettre* as being useless for the "conservation" (of the meaning) of the original, in contrary to what is traditionally claimed.[18] Translation as form, and its survival, underpin Benjamin's argument, echoes of which are

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[17] "In ihnen [Übersetzungen] erreicht das Leben des Originals seine stets erneute späteste und umfassendste Entfaltung" [In them the life of the original, constantly renewed, attains its widest and latest showing], (Benjamin 1991). *(The translation is mine* – A.C.*)*.

[18] "Demgemäβ ist die Forderung der Wörtlichkeit unableitbar aus dem Interesse der Erhaltung des Sinnes. Dieser dient weit mehr – freilich der Dichtung uns Sprache weit weniger – *die zuchtlose Freiheit schlechter Übersetzer*" [The demand for faithfulness *à la lettre* is not, then, to be deduced from a concern for conserving the meaning. Of much greater benefit – except in the case of poetry, however, and language – is the undisciplined freedom of the bad translators]. *(The italics, and the translation, are mine* – A.C.*)*. (Ib.).

to be found in Borges, in his notion of translation as re-creation and dialogue with the texts that have preceded it. One of his most categorical writings in this regard is "Kafka and his precursors", in which he makes patent this "anxiety of influence" of which H. Bloom had already spoken, and which shows that "every writer *creates* his own precursors. His work modifies our conception of the past, as it will modify the future".[19] Likewise the translation, or rather the translations, of a text. In a similar vein, "The Homeric Versions", which we recalled at the beginning of this essay, are relevant on this point, in which not only the centrality of translation in literature is stressed – inversely to what is usual in literary history – together with the famous discussion between Newman and Arnold concerning how to translate (also mentioned in "The Translators of the 1001 Nights"), but also a conception of translation as a perspective on a changeable phenomenon (the meaning of the text), more specifically, as intertext, that enriches enormously the original. And this not only because of the work of the translator – "these fine apocrypha", or the supplements, of which Borges speaks in "Los traductores de las 1001 Noches" (Borges 1989: I, 411) and in "La memoria de Shakespeare" (Borges 1989: III, 393), but also, and in the first instance, thanks to the reader himself:

> The Quixote, due to my congenital practice of Spanish, is a uniform monument, with no other variations except those provided by the publisher, the bookbinder and the typesetter; the Odyssey, thanks to my opportune ignorance of Greek, is an international bookstore of works in prose and verse (Borges 1989: I, 240).

The concept of intertextuality, in connection with a reconsideration of authorial presence, is also discussed in "The Flower of Coleridge". Here, Borges deals with the subject of the unity of all that is written as belonging to the History of the Spirit, according to which the authors are irrelevant, in what is virtually a pantheistic vision of

[19] Borges 1989: III, 90. It is no coincidence that Borges, on concluding this text, refers the reader, in a footnote, to "T. S. Eliot: *Points of View*, pp. 25–26".

authorship – all authors are *the* author, which in translation becomes an intertextual practice.

Translation also lies at the starting point of the disturbing story entitled "Brodies's Report", related here to Borges's themes *par excellence* of eternity and memory – or better still, time – and given a colonial setting, with a great linguistic, and also cultural, distance between subject and object. The story, and at the same time also a translation, deals tangentially with the subject of authorship (the hand that signed the work),[20] through a procedure of *mise en abîme* that ends up by destroying its very notion, as regards the subject of paternity (curiously denied by the story's main characters, the Yahoos who the missionary seeks to "civilise"), as well as that of the fidelity of the "translator"/Borges[21] to the original/the manuscript, found significantly in a copy of Lane's "The Thousand and One Nights", of 1839. The same line of questioning leads us, in "Pierre Menard, Author of The Quixote", to consider translation as writing, and the text as a palimpsest, which reveals the *traces*, in a new understanding of authorship and of originality. As mentioned above, this idea was forged in Borges's writings before 1930 and owed much to the influence of T. S. Eliot in his overcoming of artistic individuality and his distancing from German Romanticism.

Nevertheless, the positions Borges adopts on translation coincide in part with those of Novalis (an author that the Argentine, in fact, translated), above all as regards the belief that the beauty of the original does not necessarily have to be lost in the translation; that the translation can better even the original; in short, that it is *possible* to translate. For Novalis,

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[20] "Of David Brodie, whose signature embellished with a decorative flourish figures at the end of the report, I have been able to verify nothing", Borges 1989. "El informe de Brodie", op. cit.

[21] "*I shall translate the report faithfully* [...] without permitting myself any other omissions than those of a verse or two from the Bible and that of a curious passage about the sexual practices of the Yahoos which the good Presbyterian rendered prudishly in Latin". (ib.) *(The italics are mine* – A.C.*)*.

> Übersetzen ist so gut dicten, als eigne Werke zu stande bringen – und schwerer, seltner. Am Ende ist alle Poësie Übersetzung.[22]

However, Borges differed in opinion on one essential point. He was unable to subscribe to the need Novalis saw for the translator to identify totally with the author being translated,[23] as Borges reveals on various occasions, and as is evident in a number of his stories, including "Pierre Menard, Author of The Quixote", to cite an obvious example.

His first reflection as such on translation derives from a discussion of the famous controversy that pitted Matthew Arnold against Francis E. Newman concerning the translation of the *Iliad* into English, in which they repeat the traditional confrontation between those who favour a literal translation (Newman), and those who prefer a translation understood as a re-creation (Arnold). Borges does not initially take sides in the debate. While it is true that the changes to the original (these "fine apocrypha" of which we spoke above) might well benefit the original, it is also true – from his point of view – that literal translations, by choosing to remain faithful to the original text, might paradoxically "surprise" the reader with what in the original remained hidden, in a combination of beauty and strangeness that can prove, at the same time, to be advantageous. And so Borges's proposal is based on a consideration of the translation as a new version of the original, and on the analysis of the

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[22] "To translate is to produce literature, as much as it is to write one's own work – and it is more difficult, and stranger. In the end, all literature is translation" *(The translation is mine* – A. C.*)*. (Fridamann: 182). Novalis's comment was intended for Schlegel, in praise of his translations of Shakespeare, which he considered better than the English originals.

[23] Novalis's position on the matter presupposes to a certain point a communion of souls between author and translator, quite different from Borges's vision – and mine – on the subject. The German author, for example, expresses his ideas in the following fragment: "Nur dann zeige ich, daβ ich einen Schriftsteller verstanden habe, wenn ich in seinem Geiste handeln kann, wenn ich ihn, ohne seine Individualität zu schmälern, übersetzen, und mannigfach verändern kann". [I am only able to show that I have understood an author when I can act in his spirit, when, without reducing his individuality, I can translate him and change various things] *(The translation is mine* – A.C.*)*. (Mähl 1976: 189).

artistic value of both, without establishing a previous hierarchy (in particular one that is founded on the chronological precedence of the original). It involves – all things considered – opting not to grant the translation a secondary status, on the understanding that its artistic value does not depend in any way on its relation with the original. In common with Benjamin, who considered the translation as a form that should be valued artistically *per se,* on the basis of its success as an artistic production, Borges too understands translation not as a "transfer", but rather as another episode in the life of the text. Thus not only does he give validity to the various translations of an original, but he celebrates the chain of translations of the same text and their very multiplicity, as well as its permanence over the ages though its translations. For this reason, while it is true that Borges does not take sides in the debate between Arnold and Newman on the old subject of the translator's fidelity, it can, however, be considered that in his conception of translation as intertext, he would prefer a translator-(re)creator. In other words, the translator who joins the intertextual dialogue opened up by the process of translation, capable of giving meaning to the text: this translating "in the wake of a literature" that involves maintaining a dialogue with the sources that others have given shape to previously.

Unquestionably, it is in "The Translators of the Thousand and One Nights" (published in 1935) that Borges specifically outlines his positions on translation, understood as the re-creation and as the "tradition" of a work. The essay, included in *Historia de la eternidad* (1936), is divided in three sections: "Captain Burton", "Doctor Mardrus" and "Enno Littmann". The subject, as is known, is the highly personal analysis that Borges undertakes of the translations of a text considered a classic in western culture, "The Thousand and One Nights", by examining the interrelations between the different versions of the same work, in what the author calls "the hostile dynasty" of translators: Lane against Gallard, Burton against Lane. Borges not only confronts the different operations in the translation of a text which in its very origins was an adaptation of ancient stories to the low-brow tastes of the Cairo middle classes, but also tackles questions such as the importance of the audience of the translation, the value of the interpolations and anachronisms introduced by some

translators (Mardrus), the canonic status achieved by some translations (Gallard), the (British) modesty that is evident in others (Lane)... Rather than the similarity, it is the *difference* that emerges from this analysis. "To differ: this is the rule" (Borges 1989: I, 400) and the key that explains this history of translation: to differ from the precursor in each operation in the translation; to differ from the original in the translation.

Inevitably, Borges returns again to the well-known Arnold-Newman exchange concerning the two general ways of translating, summarised as translating the spirit of a text and translating literally, which in his eyes is a pointless controversy:

> To translate the spirit is so enormous and illusionary an intent that it may well be innocuous; to translate the letter, a requirement so extravagant that there is no risk of its ever being attempted (Borges 1989: I, 400).

The debate concerning the faithfulness of the translation to the original is taken, by Borges, into new territory, one that is more heedful of the "retention or suppression of certain particularities", and of the "movement of the syntax" (ib.). Thus, Borges is able to claim that Burton carries out "a good skewing" of the original (Borges 1989: I, 406); Madrus, in his unrestrained lavishing of oriental colour, "skews" the text, but it is his "happy and creative infidelity" that matters to Borges (Borges 1989: I, 410); Littmann, by contrast, the most rigorous and faithful of his translators, appears to him to be always "lucid, readable, mediocre" (Borges 1989: I, 412). The reasons for his differing from the more commonly held view are key to understanding his conception of translation. Because for Borges, translation is not a mere "transfer" that takes place in a void. To translate means to (re)write a work in another language *in the wake of a literature,* inserting it within a tradition that precedes it and alongside which it is defined. If he rejects Littmann's version, it is not because it is "unfaithful" or "incorrect". It is because in Littmann he finds no more than "the probity of Germany", when, in his opinion, the "commerce between Germany and the *Nights* should have produced something more", bearing in mind that Germany "possesses *only* a literature of the fantastic". In the words of Borges,

which are hard to better here: "There are marvels in the *Nights* that I would like to see rethought in German" (ib.). This is the reason why he rejects the version, based on his understanding of translation as difference. Not only a creative "infidelity" that makes the translator visible in the original, but a call for a translator-writer, who in his differences contributes to the life of the text, to its perpetuation in other literatures and in other times, in an operation that, if it adopts the strategy of taking the necessary liberties to achieve a convincing literary work, takes up a position from the beginning alongside the original text as pretext. As Kristal has written,

> for Borges a translation is not the transfer of a text from one language to another. It is a transformation of a text into another. The appreciation of a literary work, for Borges, can be enriched by translation, provided that the reader avoids the prejudice of assuming the original is the best version of the work".[24]

In this "transformation", we can infer that the translation does not matter so much as the transmission of a content, but rather that the translation be glorified as a form, just as Benjamin argued. A form that is perpetuated, and whose objective is not so much its similarity to the original as its survival in the translation, through translation.

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Music, Epiphanies, and the Language of Love: James Joyce's *Chamber Music*

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"It is not a book of love-verses at all, I perceive."
James Joyce on *Chamber Music* (Herbert Gorman 1974: 175).

The poetical collection, *Chamber Music* (1907), is probably a minor work, but a minor work by a great author, and the poems prove, by closer inspection, to be less simple than first presumed. The juvenile and self-centred verses give an excellent illustration of the melancholic narcissism, which Joyce later castigated intensely in the works of his prime.

The masturbatory auto-affection of the narcissist makes the poetical ego incapable of engaging in any interaction with the other, i.e. the beloved (who is revealed as a simulacrum of the poet pure and simple), which is why he characterises himself as "unconsortable" (XXI.5). Since love primarily is directed toward the ego, it seems inexpressible, because the libidinal affect is alienated in the exteriority of the *ex*-pression when uttered. But music and singing prove to be useful means in this respect, embodying an immediacy that is able to transcend the arbitrary conventionalism of language, because the inner content is absorbed in the exterior expression in these specific art forms. Music is furthermore hypostasised because it accomplishes an immediate state of absence of differences, which allows the subject to experience affects of the death drive that would normally be destined to frustration in the confrontation with the particularity and mediacy of the other. *Chamber Music* is a convincing poetical realisation of the unredeemed and sterile economy of narcissism, which embodies a melancholy that is due to

the annulment of the other in favour of an accentuation of the ego, which for this reason lacks anchorage in any positive and persistent reality. Thus, the self-contradiction of narcissism is striking in this poetical collection. "I wrote *Chamber Music*," as the author later confessed to Herbert Gorman "as a protest against myself" (Ellmann 1983: 149).[1]

The thirty-six poems tell the story of a juvenile love and its disappointment. The poet is alone in the beginning, he meets a girl, and their love is – after a suitable period of time – almost consummated. But at this moment a rival enters the stage, and the protagonist's affection is replaced by irony – and finally by disillusionment.[2] In the end he is back at his point of departure, i.e. in isolation, and wanders away in exile hereafter.

The tale starts in the twilight when the protagonist proceeds from day to night, is encouraged by the light of day, is almost united with the beloved by noon, whereupon hope declines through the twilight to the darkness of the night.

The course of the seasons is furthermore significant in as much as the romance is initiated in the spring, upon which the lovers enjoy each other in the summertime, losing interest in the fall, and departing in the winter.

Many of the poems in *Chamber Music* are seductive appeals, self-assertive recommendations of the lover, tributes to the beloved, and wistful longings for their amorous union – i.e. ordinary themes of love-poetry. But toward the closure – initiated by XVII which is a

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[1] According to Herman Gorman, Joyce characterised *Chamber Music* as a juvenile work with which he was not too pleased: "I don't like the book but wish it were published and be damned to it. However, it is a young man's book. I felt like that" (Gorman 1974: 175).

[2] This mystical figure, who once was a friend, appears in the middle of the sequence, where he is presented harshly and bitterly. The first line is drawn for the 'rival,' who will be a fixture in the following works of Joyce. The figure reminds us of the young priest, who distracts Emma in *Stephen Hero*, of Cranly from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, with whom Stephen is also jealous, and of course Robert, who in *Exiles* tries to seduce Bertha, the beloved of his best friend, Richard. In addition, we find Mulligan and Blazes Boylan in *Ulysses*, and the rivalry of the twins in *Finnegans Wake* – they are all variations on the same figure, who makes girls irresponsible and wives unfaithful.

remembrance of the deceit of friends: "He is a stranger to me now / Who was my friend" (vv. 7–8) – a stronger and darker tone is struck. The union of the lovers is to a lesser extent the object of attention in favour of an increasing preoccupation with their mutual separation. The lover is "unconsortable" (XXI, 5), and is compared to a bitter, isolated figure like Mithridates (XXVII.1),[3] while the lover is encouraged to be dismissive and refusing: "As they deny, deny" (XIX.8). Love can be passing (XXVIII) or even past (XXX, XXXI and XXXIII), and the feeling of rising isolation is emphasised by the two concluding poems. The lover is compared to a sad seabird "going / Forth alone" (XXXV.3–4), and love is more or less absent from the lyrical scene in XXXVI.

Since love is deprived of its necessary consort, it is solitary and its head is bent – not only in order to observe its instrument, but also in order to express sorrow, loneliness, and self-absorption.[4] Thus, in his comprehensive and recognised book on *Chamber Music*, William Tindall claims that this poem (and the poetical collection as such) signifies an infertile and latent deadly narcissism, whose undertones are strongly autoerotic:

> All softly playing,
> With head to the music bent,
> And fingers straying
> Upon an instrument.
>
> (I.9–12).

This is why he interprets these verses as follows: "The point of the poem, however, is not that Love is youthfully employed. Onanism is a symbol suggesting that the innocent hero, centred upon himself, is

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[3] Mithridas VI, king of Pontius and Bithynia (120–63 B.C.), was said to have made himself immune to poison by a constant use of antidote.

[4] The sentence that love's head is *bent* (v. 10) resonates throughout the whole of the poetical cycle. The same word is used about the girl, who bends down after the keys, in poem II, just as her head is reverently bent in IV, and she is finally bent down upon her own shadow in the grass in VII. These positions comprise a preoccupation with her self rather than others, and her narcissism becomes entirely evident in XIV, in which she, paralysed by her own reflected image, admires her self in the mirror.

incapable of reproducing the music he hears in earth and air and of uniting by art the regions of reality" (Tindall 1954: 65). The onanistic, i.e. self-centred mark of these verses is unmistakable, which is why Joyce many years after the composition of the poems referred to them as "pure lyricism of shamebreed [Chamber] music" in *Finnegans Wake* (Joyce 1975: 164).[5]

Pure lyrics are bred in shame as a result of an autoerotic act performed in isolation from the other or others as such – "Isolation is the first principle of artistic economy" (Joyce 1977a: 34) – which is why it is quite paradoxical that the poems are addressed to an other by whom the poet postulates to be enamoured.[6] In this manner T. S. Eliot must definitely be said to be right, when he asserts that sincere declarations of love are always spoken in prose and never in verse.[7] It is furthermore quite significant that when Stephen's brother, Maurice, asks him who his love poems address, the poet to be is unable to answer anything but that he does not know (ib. 37). Thus,

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[5] Cf. Roland McHugh 1991: 164.

[6] It is moreover characteristic, when Joyce later on in *Finnegans Wake* accentuates the inversions of the poetical collection: "the inversions of all this chambermade music [Chamber Music]" (Joyce 1975: 184). Thus, it is a distinctive mark of the poetical collection, with the words of the author himself, that it is markedly narcissistic and, for this reason, latently homosexual (inverted). It is furthermore clear that the word 'inversion' is connected to the infatuation with the mirror image and the resulting *homo*sexual tendency from the following, in which the word is explicitly associated with narcissism: "Nircississies are as the doaters of inversion" (*ib*. 526).

[7] This is in all circumstances confirmed by Stanislaus Joyce, who recollects an exchange of words between the brother and Francis Skeffington, who is supposed to have asked the poet if he ever had been in love to which he answered: "How would I write the most perfect love songs of our time if I were in love? [...] A poet must always write about a past or a future emotion, never about a present one. If it is a regular, right-down, honest-to-God, 'till-death-us-two-part' affair, it will get out of hand and spoil his verse. Poetry must have a safety valve properly adjusted. A poet's job is to write tragedies, not to be an actor in one" (Stanislaus Joyce 1958: 155). Since lyrics require that the poet sets himself in an immediate relation to himself (cf. the following note), it seems necessary that the poet is unblemished and untouched by experience (i.e. the other), and he must paradoxically stand outside the sphere of love (i.e. love for another) in order to write poems of love. The lyrical poet is in this manner dipping his pen in the fountain of Narcissus.

the beloved seems to a considerable extent to be a narcissistic projection, an imaginary chimera in which the poet can mirror himself undisturbed by a concrete other.[8]

This description seems splendidly fit for the collection of poems pervaded by an ironic tone, which informs the 'romantic' and emotional verses. This is clearly and boldly expressed in XXVII:

> For elegant and antique phrase,
> Dearest, my lips wax all to wise;
> Nor have I known a love whose praise
> Our piping poets solemnize [...]
> (vv. 7–10).

It can, from the persistent use of irony, be concluded that the poet is trying to distance himself from a conventional amorous theme, which claims to represent a fateful and deep-felt sincerity, and this is (in other words) a naivety with which this modern poet refuses to be affiliated. This irony signifies scepticism, but also a strategy which parallels that of sentimentality, because it strives to acquire enjoyment by an unlimited subjectivity, which is not soiled by the exterior and the contingent, i.e. the other.[9]

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[8] This circumstance is more or less natural and evident, because Joyce perceived lyrics as the most self-absorbed of all literary genres since the focus here is set in immediate, uncut *continuation* of the poet himself: "That art is lyrical whereby the artist sets forth the image in immediate relation to himself" (Joyce 1966, 145). This is in addition substantiated by the poetical protagonist's reference to himself as a "sweet sentimentalist" (XII.12), if one bears George Meredith's definition of the sentimentalist in mind, which Stephen quotes in the library: "*he who would enjoy without incurring the immense debtorship for a thing done*" (Joyce 1986: 164). In *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, where the quotation is located, Meredith writes that sentimentality is "a happy pastime, and an important science, to the timid, the idle, and the heartless: but a damning one to them who have anything to forfeit" (Meredith 1998: 227). Cf. in addition Stephen, who tellingly wonders "Art thou real, my ideal?" (Joyce 1977b: 77).

[9] This self-centred and auto-affective negation of the other is probably most outspoken in XXI, in which the poet bitter and melancholy enjoys an elevated exile from the other and others, defining himself as: "That high unconsortable one – / His love is his companion" (vv. 5–6). The negated form of this unusual word from the seventeenth century is quite remarkably here. The word, *uncon-*

sortable, brings solitude and absence to mind, but furthermore sublime presence of self, which is indicated by the adjective, *high*. The elevated solitude is in addition formulated in the following verse, which nominates the abstract amorous feeling in itself as his true companion or partner, i.e. it is the feeling as such (cleansed from the disturbing presence of the other) that stirs his affections. The poet is, in other words, longing to be autonomous, self-dependent, and self-contained as Plotinus' narcissistic god in the *Enneads* that at one and the same time is the lover and the beloved: "[he] is simultaneously the loved one and love; He is love of himself (*autou eros*); for He is beautiful only by and in Himself" (Plotinus 1966: VI.8.15). This is the unattainable and desperate goal of the poet, which he can never achieve, but which he nevertheless strives for untiringly. It is this love of self (*autou eros*) that gives him a feeling of grandeur and pleasure, but also melancholy since such a love is impossible and unattainable – however present and near its object may appear. William Tindall, who demonstrates a sharp and critical eye for the numerous pitfalls of the fascination with the self in the poetical collection, has no doubts: "If we remain within the limits of the poem, as we are told we should, 'His love,' becoming self-love may seem reason for the hero's unconsortability" (Tindall 1954: 94). There is in this manner a striking resemblance with the courteously love-code from the twelfth century – where the particular presence of the other is brought to death in favour of the imaginary universality where the poet can create and define himself the better – since the poet equally chooses to be *unconsortable* here. Cf. Guillaume IX, for instance, the first and probably most recognised of the Provencal troubadours: "Amigu'ai ieu, non sai qui s'es / C'anc no la vi" [I have a woman-friend, I don't know who she is / For I have never seen her] (Guillaume 1982: IV.25–6), and Jaufre Rudel (who is most most famous for his concept of the distant love), whose poetry accentuates the actual absence of the lady as the most essential part of the enjoyment of her: "car nuills autre jois tant no·m plai / cum gauzimens d'amor de loing" [For no other enjoyment pleases me as much / As does the enjoyment of a distant love] (Rudel 1983: VI.45–6). One of the most striking examples of this strategy from the period is nevertheless the Italian poet, Francesco Petrarca, who nearly a hundred years later writes his sonnets to Laura in his poetical cycle, *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, wherein he similarly defines himself as *unconsortable*, identifying strongly with the mythical bird, Phoenix, which indeed is characterised by being without a consort (*senza consorte*):

> Là onde il dì ven fore
> vola un augel che *sol*, senza consorte,
> di volontaria morte
> rinasce et tutto a viver si rinova.
> Così *sol* si ritrova
> lo mio voler, et così in su la cima

The use of irony is excellently substantiated in *Stephen Hero* in which Joyce to a high degree used his own memories of his youth as a literary and artistic model:

> love-verses gave him pleasure: he wrote them at long intervals and when he wrote it was always a mature and reasoned emotion which urged him. But in his expressions of love he found himself compelled to use what he called the feudal terminology and as he could not use it with the same faith and purpose as animated the feudal poets themselves he was compelled to express his love a little

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de' suoi alti pensieri al *sol* si volve,
et così si ri*sol*ve,
et così torna al suo stato di prima;
arde et more et riprende i nervi suoi
et vive poi con la fenice a prova.

[There where the day is born there flies that bird unique, without a consort that voluntarily dies to be born, renewing all its life. Just so is my desire unique, and just so at the summit of its high thoughts it turns to face the sun, and so is consumed and so returns to its original state; it burns and dies and then renews its forces and goes on living vying with the phoenix].
(Petrarca 1999: 135.5–15; my emphasis).

He is like the Phoenix unique and alone (*sol*), without a consort, which means that he is self-enclosed and self-present because he is self-begotten whereby he becomes his own origin. The phoenix is – as God, who is born by himself (for and in himself) through his son Christ, and who is inseparable from and identical with his origin: "no one knows who the Son is but the Father, or who the Father is but the Son" (*Luke* 10.22) – an image of the poet's attempt to substantiate his being without the presence of the other in favour of an ecstatic identification with an omnipotent Other, who lets him emerge into being without the contingent by which, like the Story of the Creation, he is made, not begotten, as Augustine has it: "Creata sane, non genita" (Augustine 1968: XI.10). This interpretation of essence of the poet is enthusiastically endorsed by the poet to be, Stephen Daedalus, who is convinced that the poet is not born, but made (i.e. by and from himself): "He was not convinced of the truth of the saying 'The poet is born, not made' but he was quite sure of the truth of this at least: 'The poem is made, not born'" (Joyce 1977b: 34). The image of the phoenix reveals how the contingent, that is to say the inevitable detour of the self-consciousness by the other, can be defeated through a flaming, all-embracing negativity, *arde et more et riprende i nervi suoi*, by which the subject is secured absolute autonomy through the formula: *I am my own origin, I am made, not begotten, without an other, without a consort, by and for myself – senza consorte*.

> ironically. This suggestion of relativity, he said, mingling itself with so immune a passion is a modern note. (1977: 185–86).

Irony, which was to become Joyce's most appreciated and tireless follower throughout the rest of his work, appears as a modern imperative; it is used to question (and objectify) assertions and metaphors, which have a content that is traditionally defined by metaphysics. And this is especially significant in the question of love, which in the 'feudal' terminology – hereby most likely alluding to the Provencal's *amour courtois* and the Romantic Movement's accentuation of love as a resource for transcendence – is grounded on a premise whose metaphysical nature has no legitimacy anymore. But it is nevertheless worth to note how the love-verses, in spite of the absence of any faith or belief, actually give *pleasure*.

The light touch of irony is present in something that on the face of it seems pretty innocent, namely the title, *Chamber Music*. For one thing the title refers to the musical element of the poems, for another it points toward the musical reference as being a spherical and privileged expression of love, and finally it refers to the Elizabethan tradition – "the dainty songs of the Elizabethans" (1992, 190), of which Thomas Campion (1567–1620) is a well-known example – where love-poems were set to music accompanied in a private ensemble. On the surface the title seems to indicate nothing but lyrical music that is more suited to be performed in a private, rather than a public setting. Nevertheless, the word 'chamber' contains more spicy undertones being etymologically associated with the Elizabethan word 'chambering', which signifies wantonness.[10] That these amorous poems are wanton is probably spicy, but when Joyce's well-known cloacal obsession is added to this, it becomes obscene – which nonetheless does not prevent it from being quite sophisticated and serious. If we accept Leopold Bloom's interpretation of the title, *Chamber Music*, in *Ulysses*, then it becomes *chamber pot music*.[11]

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[10] In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* the word, chambering, is used as Stephen is thinking on the Elizabethan song-tradition (Joyce 1992: 190).

[11] This interpretation of the title is furthermore validated by the anecdotes that were told about the naming of *Chamber Music*. In the summer of 1904 Gogarty

While sitting at the Ormond Bar listening to music, Bloom is thinking it over in the following terms:

> Chamber music. Could make a kind of pun on that. It is a kind of music I often thought when she. Acoustics that is. Tinkling. Empty vessels make most noise. Because the acoustics, the resonance changes according as the weight of the water is equal to the law of falling water. Like those rhapsodies of Liszt's, Hungarian, gipsyeyed. Pearls. Drops. Rain. Diddle iddle addle addle oodle oodle. (Joyce 1986: 232).

The ceaselessly self-reflecting author is here offering an intra-textual comment on the work of his youth, whose title not only refers to the dainty musicality of the poems, but also to their jolly, ironical, and straightforward indecencies.

Indeed, the reader inevitably realises that Joyce expresses love *a little ironically*! Joyce repeatedly insists, like Montaigne, on the humble and human fate of the chamber pot, since "les Roys et les philosophes fientes, et les dames aussi" (Montaigne 1962: 1063). Regardless of how great a king might be, how wise a philosopher should happen to be, or how beautifully a woman might shine, they all have this in common that all of them, without exceptions, have to go to the chamber pot once in a while – just like everybody else! Such a way of thinking is not far from Joyce's, but must be supplemented with the author's conception of defecation and

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was supposed to have brought Joyce along with him on a visit to Jenny, a carefree widow with an appetite for life, by whom they drank porter while Joyce read some of his poems aloud. The widow is reported to have been quite amused by this entertainment, but at one time she had to withdraw to the chamber pot behind a screen. Gogarty exclaimed, while the two men were listening to the widow who relieved herself: 'There's a critic for you!' Critic or not, Joyce answered allegedly: 'She has given me a title for my book. I shall call it Chamber Music'. Later when the story reached Stanislaus's ears, the brother remarked: 'You can take it as a favorable omen'! It is for this reason rather unfortunate when Ezra Pound is trying to help his poetical colleague, claiming that *Chamber Music* "is an excellent antidote for those who [...] fly to conclusions about Mr. Joyce's 'cloacal obsession'" (Pound 1920: 210). Cf. Richard Ellman's *James Joyce* (154) and Herbert Gorman's *James Joyce* (116).

urination as metaphors for the artistic process of creation. Urination is, for instance, an example of creation in *Ulysses*, as when Stephen pees on the beach after he has completed a poem (chapter three),[12] and the artist, Shem, is producing his own ink from his own faeces in *Finnegans Wake*.

However, three explicit themes manage to break through the ironical varnish of the poetical collection. These themes, which are of the utmost importance for the understanding of the poems, and which prove to be interconnected, are the themes of *music*, *love*, and *loss*.

In his studies on Joyce, Harry Levin makes the observation that the striking feature of the author's lyrics is that they are particularly musical: "lyrics in the strictest sense, all of Joyce's poems have the practical virtue that they can be set to music and sung" (Levin 1941: 36). This is especially true of *Chamber Music*, of which Joyce makes the following remark: "The book is in fact a suite of songs and if I were a musician I suppose I should have set them to music myself" (Joyce 1957a: 67). And in a conversation with Herman Gorman, the author is furthermore said to have emphasised the musical potential of the poems: "they are pretty enough to be put to music. I hope someone will do so, someone that knows old English music such as I like" (Gorman 1974: 175). The obvious musical signification of the title is in addition followed by the appearance of music, singing, whistling, and the orchestral show of instruments, which appear in nearly half of the poetical collection (sixteen out of thirty-six).

It is, generally speaking, by means of music that love is expressed in these verses: "Play on, invisible harps, unto love" (III.11) and it proves to be an attendant to love throughout the whole of the poetical collection: "There's music along the river / For love wanders there" (I.5–6).

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[12] It is not the whole truth, when Herbert Gorman accentuates the melodious and pretty harmony of the verses: "one reads them and in the mind's ear a harpsichord is faintly playing the quaint Elizabethan accompaniments" (Gorman 1971: 15). Instead of a harpsichord that is well in tune, one is rather listening, if one is listening well, to the tones of a *harpsdischord* as it says in *Finnegans Wake* (Joyce 1975: 13)!

Music seems to be a privileged means to express love, and this fact is clearly formulated in a conversation between Stephen and Cranly in *Stephen Hero*, when they are discussing Dante's *Vita Nuova* and Stephen's love poems. Here Stephen claims that love is an expression for "something inexpressible," but also that: "Love can express itself in part through song" (Joyce 1977: 175–76). Stephen has serious doubts whether it is possible to express an affect like that; but if it should be possible at all, it must be through singing, which as a lyrical discipline can express what otherwise would be incommunicable. In a small article on James Clarence Mangan, Joyce himself emphasises that it is the privilege of poetry to transcend the exterior and contingent expression of language: "Verse, indeed, is not the only expression of rhythm, but poetry in any art transcends the mode of its expression [...] A song by Shakespeare or Verlaine [...] is discovered to be the rhythmic speech of an emotion otherwise incommunicable" (Joyce 1966a: 75). The poetical and singing are privileged means to express the gamut of emotions, and among these love in particular, since it contains a presence of itself, which conventional language cannot achieve. The content, which normally is strictly separated from the expression due to the universal essence of language, is absorbed in the musical representation, which, for this reason, gives it an unheard degree of presence.[13]

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[13] Julia Kristeva claims in her *Sêmeiôtikê* that the poetical content is fundamentally ambivalent: "le signifié poétique jouit d'un statut ambivalent" (Kristeva 1969: 252), since "[l]e signifié poétique à la fois renvoie et ne renvoie pas à une référent; il existe et n'existe pas, il est en même temps un être et un non-être" (*ib.* 253). She maintains that the poetical content is ambivalent, because it is simultaneously particular and universal, being and nothingness, affirmation and negation, the other and the same, literal and figurative, and ultimately denotative and connotative. The poet is striving to make the being present in something that is not, to fuse the representation and the represented, and to express the particular in the universal, the universal in the particular. The poetical content is basically ambivalent since it, according to Kristeva (cf. *ib.* 252), rejects the individuation, which means that the subject-object relation is rejected in favour of a regressive longing for a narcissistic unity in which object and subject-libido coincide. The project of the poet is monological, and he strives toward a unity with himself, which is actualized in a circular and narcissistic auto-communication in which he (so to speak) listens to his own speech – whereby he aims at being his own sender and recipient.

By means of music, which is a dynamic and present materialization for the perception, the difference between the content and the expression, between language and the world, consciousness and unconsciousness, is obliterated. The conventionalism of communication is thus transcended in favour of a feeling of enjoyment and presence. This is why music is able to avoid the poetical misconception, which consists in not apprehending the representation *in union* with the represented: "Yet to concentrate solely on the literal sense or even the psychological content of any document to the sore neglect of the enveloping facts themselves circumstantiating it is [...] hurtful to sound sense" (Joyce 1975: 109). It is indeed through the capacity of this unifying force, which allows two entities normally strictly separated to unite, that music and singing are depicted as the true medium of love; and it is for this reason that singing, in the chapter on music in *Ulysses* (Sirens), is defined as: "Language of love" (Joyce 1986: 226).

Through the use of music, the poet is able to annul the loathed particularity of the other and transform it to a lyrical and auto-affective chimera: "malady of milady [he] made melodi of malodi" (Joyce 1975: 229). By transforming the evil of hatred (L. *malum odi*), originated in the contingent dependency on the other, to the virtual medium of singing, which is undetermined and unsoiled by the other, the poet proves to be suffering from a *lady complex* that is determined by a certain autoerotic and abstract incantation of a non-existent woman.[14]

As mentioned above, the loss of love plays a crucial part in the overall theme of *Chamber Music* – as this is certified by Joyce's brother, Stanislaus: "These lyrics are arranged in a certain order, and they seem to tell the story of a love which did not last" (Joyce 1950: 12). In Tindall's comments on the poems, the critic similarly notes that: "Plainly *Chamber Music* is the story of his [the poet's] attempt at love and its failure" (Tindall 1954: 84).

Later on Joyce analysed this paralysis or inflamed fascination by loss, absence, or the void (which he felt laid the foundation for music and the experience hereof) more at length. This is clear in the just

[14] Cf. *James Joyce's Scribbledehobble: The Ur-Workbook for Finnegans Wake* (24) in the section Joyce headed 'Chamber Music.'

mentioned chapter in *Ulysses*, where the psychological space for loss and compensation is explored in connection with music and singing, which *per se* is said to express the mourning of the lost object of desire or love: "Thou lost one. All songs on that theme" (Joyce 1986: 228). Singing is furthermore strongly erotically pregnant with meaning, since it designates a phallic representation of a fetishistic nature: "Tenderness it welled: slow, swelling, full it throbbed [...] Throb, a throb, a pulsing proud erect" (ib. 225). In the musical world Dublin, the professional singers are supposed to be unusually virile and to have extraordinary great sexual success: "Tenors get women by the score" (ib.). Thus, it is quite telling when Bloom offers the following reflection on Simon Dedalus: "Wore out his wife: now sings" (ib.), which means that the song – "*Co-me, thou lost one!*" (ib. 226) – is a symbolic re-enactment of the lost object of desire, which self-destructively iterates the traumatic situation of loss itself. The desire evoked in music is in this manner initiated as an effect of an original lack of being, and this signifies that the pleasure of music indicates a fundamental impossibility of pleasure itself.[15]

The reference of all speech or language is in a certain way the emptiness of the words and their fundamental virtuality.[16] But the persistent refuge to this core of absence entails paradoxically a pleasure, which designates a communicative surplus value, since the inexpressibly is nevertheless uttered partly. For this reason, we are told – in one of the fragments from the poetical collection, *Shine and Dark* (which in style and content correspond entirely with *Chamber Music*) – that "the dearest loss is gain / In a holier treasury" (XXX.5–6).[17] The sentence is echoed years later in *Ulysses*, where it is equally said about Shakespeare that "loss is his gain" (Joyce 1986: 16). It is difficult not to notice the conspicuous *voluptas dolendi*, in which loss and pain disclose beauty and pleasure. The subliminal pleasure by

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[15] The intrinsic relation between the lost object of love and the musical enjoyment is additionally designates by the choice of song that Simon Dedalus sings ('Godbye Godbye, Sweetheart, Godbye' and 'M'appari').

[16] Joyce seems to be of the same opinion when, in his *Scribbledehobble*, he writes that "sense of word = O" (Joyce 1961: 13).

[17] Cf. *Chamber Music, Pomes Penyeach, & Occasional Verse: A Facsimile of Manuscripts, Typescripts, & Proofs* (15).

the subversion of the subject, wherein the interior and the exterior world fuse, is a special feature of music; this is evident in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* where the sensitive Stephen is deeply touched by music, which gives him a feeling not only of melancholy, but also of beauty: "How beautiful and sad that was! [...] How sad and how beautiful! He wanted to cry quietly but not for himself: for the words, so beautiful and sad, like music" (Joyce 1992: 22).

In as much as it is founded in language, the subject is deprived of something of itself, of its libidinal life, and its body; however this is recapitulated on a certain level in singing and music, which suspend the difference between the ego and the other, language and the world, inner and outer, conscious and unconscious, etc. It is precisely the suspension of this difference, which makes music the language of love and desire. But hereby we arrive at the aspect of desire, which psychoanalysis characterises as the death-drive, and which signifies a drive toward negating temporality by returning to a pre-organic and lifeless state beyond division and splitting.[18] The death drive

[18] Freud defines the death-drive as a conservative drive that strives back for an original, regressive feeling of unity: "die Wendung des Triebes gegen eigene Ich, wäre dann in Wirklichkeit eine Rückkehr zu einer früheren Phase desselben, eine Regression" (Freud 1999: 59). He asks in continuation of Aristophanes – who explains how all lovers desire to fuse with the beloved in order to be one: "to be joined and fused with his beloved that the two might be made one" (Plato 1996: 192e) – if it could not be possible, "daß die lebende Substanz bei ihrer Belebung in kleine Partikel zerrissen wurde, die seither durch die Sexualtriebe ihre Wiedervereinigung anstreben?" (Freud 1999: 63). He answers the question affirmatively, maintaining that the living matter (as tension) longs for the life-less, i.e. the tension-less: "Die damals entstandende Spannung in dem vorhin unbelebten Stoff trachtete danach, sich abzugleichen; es war der erste Trieb gegeben, der, zum Leblosen zurückzukehren" (*ib.* 40). The myth could additionally serve as an exellent illustration of Lacan's notion about the phantasm, which is an extended development of the death-drive as "l'évanouissement du sujet" (Lacan 1966: 774). According to Lacan, the subject wishes to overcome existence's fundamental experience of division through a disappearance in the desired object that per definition is designated as the absent, which introduces "une identité qui se fonde sur une non-réciprocité absolue" (*ibid.*). The phantasm is the utopia of desire to defeat temporality through the formula, ½ + ½ = 1, thus repressing the split and death within human existence in favour of an absolute presence. This formula is, off course, impossible and would rather result in non-being for the lovers, but this is in a certain manner the very

signifies, in short, a desire for an ending – as Peter Brooks has demonstrated convincingly in his *Reading for the Plot* – i.e. a desire for transparency, for the pre-natal state of non-tension, and finally for an abolition of the sundering, the differences, and the ambivalence of life. Thus, the death-drive utters itself markedly in music,[19] which works as a catalyst for the pleasurable dissolution of the ego, and this is clearly expressed in one of the poems from the unfinished *Shine and Dark*:

> Faster and faster! strike the harps in the hall!
> Woman, I fear that this dance is the dance of death!
> Faster! – ah, I am faint… and, ah, I fall.
> The distant music mournfully murmureth.
>
> (XI.5–8).[20]

The music is striking up an erotic Dance of Death, where the musical enjoyment correlates to the dissolution of the ego or the enjoyment of the erotic perdition in the other. By this, the music reveals the dynamic presence of death in the experience of love. The Provencal poet from the thirteenth century, Pierre Milon, is for this reason, in his 'En amor trob pietat gran', dissolving *amore* to *a! mor!* (i.e. *ah! death!*) – a wordplay, which Joyce repeats similarly in *Finnegans Wake* as "Amor andmore!" (Joyce 1975: 148).[21] If death lures behind

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goal of the phantasm, namely the desire for the impossible, i.e. the subversion of the subject: "S'il y a deux désirs chez l'homme, qui le captent, d'une part dans le rapport à l'éternité, et d'autre part, dans le rapport de génération, avec la corruption et la destruction qu'il comporte, c'est le désir de mort" (Lacan 1991: 154).

[19] It is for this reason that Hans Castorp gets a bad conscience in Thomas Mann's *Der Zauberberg*, because he suspects that his immense pleasure of the records' music is dictated by the suggestive force of death: "Worin bestanden denn aber Hans Castorps Gewissens- und Regierungszweifel an der höheren Erlaubtheit seiner Liebe zu dem bezaubernden Liede und seiner Welt? Welsches war diese dahinter stehende Welt, die seiner Gewissensahnung zufolge eine Welt verbotener Liebe sein sollte? / Es war der Tod" (Mann 1966: 905).

[20] Cf. *Chamber Music, Pomes Penyeach, & Occasional Verse – A Facsimile of Manuscripts, Typescripts, & Proofs* (6).

[21] Cf. Mark Musa's translation of Francesco Petrarca's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (524).

the musical experience of beauty, and if music is plainly the language of love and takes precedence over all other artistic genres with regard to the expression of amorous feelings, then the death-drive must necessarily be a crucial element in the praxis of love-life.

This circumstance is, for example, uttered in VI from *Chamber Music*, where the amorous longings of the lover parallels those of the death-drive in as much as the protagonist formulates a conservative desire, which points back toward an original regressive feeling of unity with the maternal:

> I would in that sweet bosom be
> (O sweet it is and fair it is!)
> Where no rude wind might visit me.
> Because of sad austerities
> I would in that sweet bosom be.
>
> (VI.1–5).

This interpretation is explicitly substantiated by Joyce himself, who in a letter to Nora reproduces the poem with the following preceding lines: "You will take me now into your bosom and shelter me and perhaps pity me for my sins and follies and lead me like a child" (Joyce 1966b: 249). The longing to be dissolved in the omnipotent Other can moreover be illustrated and documented from Joyce's poem, 'A Prayer,' from the poetical collection, *Poemes Penyeach* (Joyce 1957a): "Together, folded by the night, they lay on earth. I hear / From far her low word breathe on my breaking brain. / *Come!* I yield. Bend deeper upon me! *I am her* [my emphasis] / Subduer, do not leave me! Only joy, only anguish, / Take me, save me, soothe me, O spare me!" (vv. 15–19). It is furthermore evident from the beautiful religious poem, 'Morada del Cielo,' by Fray Luis de Léon (1527–1591) that a great degree of the amorous desire aims at the perdition, the loss or the death of the self in the fusion with the other:

> ¡Oh son! ¡Oh voz! Siquiera
> pegueña parte alguna descendiese
> en mi sentido, y fuera
> de sí el alma puiese,
> y toda en ti, ¡oh Amor!

> [O sound! O voice! If but the slightest echo were to tumble down to my ear, my soul cut free from itself would drown wholly in you, O love]. (vv. 31–35).

The ecstatic element plays an important part in the amorous activity of the death-drive and indicates both a desire for self-destruction and a desire for more being, i.e. more being than the lover possesses by himself. The lover desires to transcend himself by fusing together with the other, who gives him more being though he in a certain way loses himself.

The ecstatic fusion with the other is of a strongly sensual kind and is to a considerably degree played out in the voice and in speech (*¡Oh son! ¡Oh voz!*) – i.e. in singing and music – since speaking simultaneously designates a distance from the other (thus instigating the desire) and a medium in which the distance is overcome (thus fulfilling the desire), which is why Jacques Lacan is able to conclude that: "la parole emporte [...] amour" (1966: 264). But for the narcissistic love, which *Chamber Music* must be said to be good example of, language is problematic, because it does not allow things (what language signifies) to appear by themselves. Words are always referring to other words and concepts, and since the relationship between words and things is arbitrary, it is necessarily impossible for the thing (the signified) to show itself as it is in itself. In the economy of language, things (the signified) are necessarily dependent on the linguistic expressions (the signifiers) to gain some sort of presence – a presence which is soiled by the heterogeneity of the representations themselves, which have no share with the substance or essence of the represented. This is an utterly inappropriate circumstance for a narcissistic strategy and this is precisely what the concept of the epiphany is designated to parry.

The concept of the epiphany arose in a young and self-absorbed Joyce, and it is also, in many ways, an expression of a narcissistic utopia that allows the thing to appear independent of anything else than itself.[22] The epiphany thus serves the same purpose as music,

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[22] In her monumental book, *The Exile of James Joyce*, Hélène Cixous gives an exceedingly favourable description of the epiphany as "a sublimated narcissism" (218).

which is positioned as an excellent means to express the inexpressible (*something inexpressible*) – namely love. In the narcissistic perception, love must necessarily be inexpressible, since its object unmitigated is the self, which it desperately seeks to express *idem per idem*.

But what is an epiphany?

"By an epiphany he meant a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind" (Joyce 1977: 188). Such a sudden spiritual manifestation is primarily of an aesthetic nature, and it involves a rupture with the generally agreed division between things and words, consent and expression, and object and subject, since the object of the epiphany manages to break through its alienating form of appearance; in other words it transcends the latter in order to be perceived as it is for itself, by and in itself, independent of any other medium than itself. The object of the epiphany is thus actualised by a certain kind of phenomenological reduction, which implies that everything besides the object is reduced to nothingness, since the entity of the object is perceived by the negation of everything else: "Your mind to apprehend that object divides the entire universe into two parts, the object, and the void which is not the object. To apprehend it you must lift it away from everything else: and then you perceive that it is one integral thing, that it is *a* thing" (ib. 190). What is not identical, what does not belong to the peculiarity of the object, is reduced to pure nothingness, whereby the aesthetic experience of the epiphany designates a disappearance of everything but the ecstatic experience in itself.

This is furthermore what Schopenhauer, whom we know that Joyce read too, accentuates as the primary purpose of the aesthetic experience, which at its highest is an objectification of the will to live (i.e. desire in all its shapes). Schopenhauer's description of the aesthetic experience, which is directed toward the loss of a self that vanishes to die in the fusion with the aesthetic object, has indeed a striking resemblance with the description of the epiphany: "das Subjekt aufhört ein bloß individuelles zu seyn und jetzt reines, willenloses Subjekt der Erkentniß ist, welches nicht mehr, dem Satze vom Grunde gemäß, den Relationen nachgeht; sondern in fester

Kontemplation des dargebotenen Objekts, außer seinem Zusammenhange mit irgend andern, ruht und darin aufgeht" (1989: 243–44). The plurality of references is in the aesthetic epiphany vanished in favour of this *évanouissement du sujet*, which Lacan emphasises as the primary activity of the death-drive. An attempt to formulate the aesthetic experience, i.e. the epiphanic, proves indeed to be highly problematic, and it is undeniably evident that the object must appear as *something inexpressible*, when it must be translated without the interference of any network of references (*außer seinem Zusammenhange*).

The economy of the epiphany is consequently narcissistic and Joyce's attitude toward it becomes increasingly sarcastic (for instance in *Ulysses*) as his talent and vision matures and consolidates itself – which elapses proportionally with his overcoming of his narcissism that the fateful meeting with his partner of his life, Nora Barnacle, brought about – and the concept of the epiphany is utterly destroyed in the approximate infinity of heterogeneous references in his last work.[23] In *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce himself calls attention to the circumstance that the epiphany contains this objectification of the will (which Schopenhauer perceived as the highest good of the artistic experience), since its essentialist adventure to let everything besides the object vanish into nothingness eventually dissolves the object into the void and death as well. And *the void which is not the*

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[23] Joyce kept a notebook of his epiphanies, which was later found and published. Here it becomes clear that the attempts to utter *the inexpressible* – which corresponds to "inside true inwardness of reality, the Ding hvad in idself id est" (Joyce 1975: 611), i.e. the object in itself, the thing in itself, as it is in itself apart from every thinkable mode of perception, appearance, or linguistic expression – results in a peculiar absence of meaning or significance. This is due to the fact that the referential relations, which normally preserve the fullness of meaning, are eliminated; it is furthermore for this reason that the epiphanies often seem private and somehow meaningless, which, for example, is clear in the following epiphany that is quoted in its entirety:

> Joyce – I knew you meant him. But you're wrong about his age.
> Maggie Sheehy – (*leans forward to speak seriously*) Why how old is he?
> Joyce – Seventy-two.
> Maggie Sheehy – Is he?
> (Joyce 1977a: 1).

object is for this reason just another word for the destructive longings of the death-drive to disappear and fuse with the beloved object, which per definition is the absent or the void. An epiphany is consequently recognised as an apocalypse: "Apophanypes" (Joyce 1975: 626).[24]

The youthful self-love (and the following melancholy) that these 'love-verses' articulate was later on vanquished by Joyce through his decisive meeting with Nora, who transformed him totally – as a human being and as an artist. From now on Joyce was finished with immature love-verses, and hereafter he devoted himself entirely to the epic genre (and the dramatic for a brief time), because he felt that the lyrical was too inadequate to describe and perceive reality, since the essence of the lyrical is primarily narcissistic. Setting himself in opposition to this, he had (from now on) recourse to the epic genre, because he felt that it complied with the necessity to employ oneself actively with the other: "That art is lyrical whereby the artist sets forth the image in immediate relation to himself; that art is epical whereby the artist sets the image in mediate relation to himself and to others" (Joyce 1966a: 145). The immediacy of the lyrical ego steps back in favour of a mediate ego, which finds its ground outside itself in the other.

The masturbatory and infertile rejection of the other that defines the narcissistic and auto-affective strategy is replaced by a curios and joyful desire for the other, who is no longer perceived as an obstacle, but rather as a gift or a surplus of being that makes the ego capable of transcending the limits of itself.

Love is from now on a phenomenon that designates the dynamic presence of the other in the ego, who must find it essence outside itself in the passing, but inescapable beauty of the other.

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[24] Cf. Roland McHugh: *Annotations to Finnegans Wake* (626).

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Marie Under und der deutsche Expressionismus

AIGI HEERO

Marie Under (1883–1980) zählt zu den bedeutendsten estnischen Lyrikerinnen. Sie begann als Schulmädchen Gedichte zu schreiben und schon ihre ersten Veröffentlichungen erweckten Aufmerksamkeit. Dabei muss erwähnt werden, dass ihre lyrischen Erstlingswerke auf Deutsch geschrieben waren (Kiin 2000: [1]). Marie Under hatte ja, wie die meisten Töchter aus wohlhabenden Familien in Estland, deutschsprachige Bildung erhalten. Wie sie selber bekennt, hatte sie in ihrer Kindheit kaum Kontakt zur estnischen Literatur, ihre Lieblingsdichter waren in ihrer Schulzeit die deutschen Klassiker Goethe und Schiller, die sie als 13–14-jährige gierig verschlang. Sie schrieb sogar ganze Dramen ab und stellte sich aus diesen schmalen Heften somit eine Art Bibliothek zusammen (Hinrikus u.a. 2003: 32). Ihre ersten Gedichte finden sich in zwei Heften mit dem Titel *Dir*. Das sind vorwiegend Liebesdichtungen, die literarische Vorbilder nachahmen. Zum Beispiel reiht sich ihr deutschsprachiges Gedicht „Vorfrühlingsnacht" in die deutsche Tradition der Biedermeierlyrik ein, die Parallelen zu der Lyrik der baltendeutschen Dichterinnen sind auffällig (ib. 34). Doch schon in diesen lyrischen Erstlingswerken gibt sich zweifellos ein großes Talent zu erkennen. Ihr erstes publiziertes Gedicht „Ema laul" (Gesang der Mutter) dagegen war auf estnisch, es wurde abgedruckt dank Ants Laikmaa im Jahre 1904. Dieses Ereignis leitete die sprachliche Wende bzw. den Sprachwechsel in Unders Schaffen ein, d.h. einen weiteren und sehr wichtigen Übergang in einen ganz anderen kulturellen Raum (ib. 32).

Doch hat Under ihre „deutsche Wurzel" nicht vergessen. In den 1920er Jahren verbrachte sie mehrere Jahre in Deutschland, ihr Interesse für die deutsche Literatur und Kultur blieb bestehen. In diesem Kontext gewinnt ihre Tätigkeit als Übersetzerin und Vermittlerin der aktuellen deutschen Literatur eine besondere Bedeutung. Schon in ihren frühesten Jahren hatte sie einige Gedichte Goethes übersetzt, während ihrer Zeit als Mitglied der Schriftstellervereinigung „Siuru" wand sie sich zur deutschen Literatur der Jahrhundertwende und übersetzte Gedichte Richard Dehmels, Hugo von Hofmannsthals, Stefan Georges und Rainer Maria Rilkes.

Für Unders lyrisches Schaffen ist vielleicht die Beschäftigung mit dem deutschen Expressionismus ab 1918 von noch größerer Bedeutung. Zum allgemeinen Verständnis muss hier kurz erwähnt werden, dass der Expressionismus in diesen Jahren in dem literarischen Leben Estlands eine wichtige Rolle spielte. Seine Popularität erklärt sich natürlich auch mit dem zeitlichen Kontext: Die Gründung der Estnischen Republik und die politischen Wirren danach spiegeln sich in den expressionistisch anmutenden Gedichten Unders und vieler anderen Dichterkollegen wider – diese Zeit ist durchaus vergleichbar mit der Blütezeit des Expressionismus in Deutschland. Dank aktiver Tätigkeit vieler estnischer Literaten wurde der deutsche Expressionismus als eine moderne Strömung in der estnischen literarischen Öffentlichkeit von damals bewusst. Im Bemühen der jungen estnischen Literatur, sich gegen die dominierende deutschbaltische Kultur aufzulehnen, musste ein geistiger Kredit aufgenommen und der Modernismus in die estnische Literatur entlehnt werden (Lukas 2001: 248), das heißt, modernistische Literaturanschauungen wurden direkt übernommen. Einen bedeutenden Beitrag bei der Adaption des deutschen Expressionismus hat auch Marie Under geleistet: Sie übersetzte als erste viele Gedichte von bedeutenden Expressionisten, etwa die von Georg Heym, Franz Werfel, Ernst Stadler, Georg Trakl, Ernst Blass, Else Lasker-Schüler und Johannes R. Becher, um hier nur die bekanntesten Namen zu nennen, die erstmals in einer Gedichtanthologie der „Siuru" erschienen (vgl. Under 1919: 35–43) und etwas später zusammen mit ihren früheren Übersetzungen in dem Gedichtband *Valik saksa uuemast lüürikast* (Auswahl aus der deutschen neuesten Lyrik)

(Under 1920a). Zu erwähnen ist hier auch Unders Überblicksartikel *Ekspressionismist saksa kirjanduses* (Über Expressionismus in der deutschen Literatur), in dem sich deutlich ihre emotionale Haltung zeigt. Sie äußert dort die Meinung, dass in der Literatur ab jetzt neue Ideale, die ‚des Herzen und des Geistes' vorherrschen sollten (Under 1920b). Beim Verfassen dieser Schrift hat sie sich anscheinend auf einige programmatische Texte von expressionistischen Theoretikern bezogen, etwa auf Kurt Pinthus, der in seinem Vorwort für die Anthologie *Menschheitsdämmerung* die Ziele der expressionistischen Lyrik wie folgt festlegt: „(...) sie [muss] ganz Eruption, Explosion, Intensität [sein], (...) um jene feindliche Kruste zu sprengen. (...) sie erzeugt sich mit gewaltiger und gewaltsamer Energie ihre Ausdrucksmittel aus der Bewegungskraft des Geistes" (Pinthus 1919/92: 29–30). Natürlich schlägt sich diese Haltung auch in Unders eigenen Gedichten nieder. Deshalb wird im Folgenden genauer untersucht, welche Gedichte der deutschen Expressionisten Under zum Übersetzen auswählte und wie diese Auswahl ihr eigenes Schaffen, insbesondere ihre Lyrik, die sie etwa um 1920 verfasste, beeinflusst hat.

Als Grundlage für diese Ausführungen dient die von Under zusammengestellte Sammlung *Valik saksa uuemast lüürikast* (Under 1920a). In diesem Band finden sich 94 übersetzte Gedichte von insgesamt 21 Autoren, von denen 17 zu den Vertretern des deutschen Expressionismus gezählt werden. Die Präsentation dieser Dichter erlaubt dem Leser einen chronologischen und auch inhaltlichen Überblick über die deutsche expressionistische Strömung. Als erster Autor unter ihnen wird Georg Heym präsentiert, der schon 1912 ertrank und der für viele, die nach ihm kamen, großes Vorbild wurde. Es folgen die Gedichte von Franz Werfel und Else Lasker-Schüler. Diese zwei Künstlerpersönlichkeiten verbindet außer ihrer jüdischen Herkunft eine sehr intensive Freundschaft. Nächste Autorengruppe bilden Ernst Stadler, Georg Trakl und Ernst Wilhelm Lotz, die alle im Ersten Weltkrieg fielen, ihnen folgen Expressionisten, die den Krieg überlebten und etwa 1917–1918 ihre bekanntesten Texte verfassten. Als letztes wird das Schaffen von Johannes R. Becher dargestellt, der an dieser Stelle als eine Art Zusammenfassung fungiert: Es wurden Gedichte aus der Zeit des Krieges und danach

ausgewählt, wobei alle diese Gedichte auch inhaltlich verschiedene, für den deutschen Expressionismus wichtige Themen anschneiden.

Eine wesentliche Stelle jedoch nehmen in dieser Sammlung die Übersetzungen der Gedichte von Else Lasker-Schüler (1876–1945) ein. Von dieser Dichterin finden sich in Unders Sammlung 11 Texte: „Seebaot“ („Zebaoth”), „Vaarao ja Joosep“ („Pharao und Joseph”), „Maarja Naatsaretist“ („Marie von Nazareth”), „Üks laul“ („Ein Lied”), „Mu armulaul” („Mein Liebeslied”), „Giselherile, tiigrile“ („Giselheer dem Tiger”), „Prints Tristanile“ („An den Prinzen Tristan”), „Barbaarile“ („Dem Barbaren”), „Kullast rüütlile“ („An den Ritter aus Gold”), „Kuule“ („Höre!”) und „Franz Werfel“ (Under 1920a: 83–96). Marie Under hat damit eine interessante Auswahl getroffen, denn es handelt sich ausnahmslos um „Widmungsgedichte”, d.h. es sind Gedichte, die starke Liebesgefühle zu bekannten Persönlichkeiten (wie Franz Werfel) bzw. Personen, die hinter einem Pseudonym (Giselheer) versteckt sind, ausdrücken; andererseits reflektiert Lasker-Schüler am Beispiel von biblischen Gestalten (wie Maria oder Joseph) über verschiedene Aspekte der Liebe.

Warum Under gerade von Lasker-Schüler das umfangreichste Übersetzungskorpus in ihre Sammlung aufgenommen hat, kann man nur raten. Wahrscheinlich spielte hierbei auch eine gewisse Seelenverwandtschaft eine Rolle: Zwischen Else Lasker-Schüler und Marie Under lassen sich etliche Parallelen ziehen. Lasker-Schüler gilt als Vertreterin des Expressionismus, jedoch können ihre Gedichte nur bedingt als expressionistisch eingestuft werden. Sie war außerdem eine eigenwillige weibliche Persönlichkeit in der weitgehend männlichen Gesellschaft der Expressionisten: Sie war zweimal verheiratet und ließ sich auch zweimal scheiden (Kupper 1966: 297–300). (Bezeichnenderweise ist sie auch die einzige weibliche Autorin in Unders Sammlung.) Während ihres ganzen Lebens hatte Lasker-Schüler zahlreiche Künstler- und Dichterfreunde, zu denen Ernst Toller, Oskar Kokoschka, Alfred Loos, Paul Zech u.a. gehörten. Von manchen Zeitgenossen wurde sie als „ewig verliebt” beschrieben (ib. 302). Diese ewige Verliebtheit äußerte sich in ihren Liebesgedichten für Gottfried Benn oder Georg Trakl (ib.). Sie schenkte fast allen ihren Freunden neue Namen und nahm sie als Bürger ihres

Phantasiereichs Theben auf, über das sie als Prinz Jussuf herrschte (ib. 303). Während ihrer Berliner Jahre zeichnete sich Else Lasker-Schüler auch durch ihre auffällige Erscheinung aus: Sie lehnte die traditionelle Frauenrolle der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft ab, hatte kurze Haare, trug weite Hosen, bunte Gewänder und auffälligen Schmuck. Als Mitglied der Berliner literarischen Szene ist sie eine der großen Gestalten des aufstrebenden Expressionismus ([2], am 01.03.06). Auch Marie Under war das einzige weibliche Mitglied in der Dichtergesellschaft „Siuru", wo sie unter dem Namen „Prinzessin" bekannt war (auch ihre männlichen Schriftstellerkollegen trugen poetische Decknamen). Sie kultivierte nicht unbedingt so einen extravaganten Lebensstil wie Lasker-Schüler, doch wie diese Dichterin polarisierte auch Under die öffentliche Meinung, was sich u.a. in den Kritiken zu ihrer Gedichtsammlung *Sonetid* (Sonette) zeigt. Marie Under pflegte kein solches literarisches Rollenspiel in der Literatur und im Leben wie Else Lasker-Schüler, aber doch verkörperte sie einen ähnlichen Habitus, d.h. ein inkorporiertes Schema systematischer Lebensführung (Bourdieu 1987: 101).

Die Enflüsse Lasker-Schülers zeigen sich in Marie Unders Gedichten (geschrieben um 1920) im formalen und im inhaltlichen Bereich. Besonders in Unders zweiter Sammlung *Sinine puri* (Das blaue Segel) finden wir etliche Einflüsse der Berliner Expressionistin. Ähnlich wie Lasker-Schüler verwendet Under in dieser Sammlung vielfach mehr zwei- oder dreizeilige Strophen und komplizierte Versschemata, die sie bisher weitgehend vermieden hatte und die auch in Lasker-Schülers Dichtungen oft vorkommen. Zu finden sind auch verwandte Motive: Beide Dichterinnen vertreten eine neue Art von Liebeslyrik, die als eine sehr direkte und emanzipierte Liebesbekundung einer selbstbewussten jungen Frau gelesen werden kann und die vor allem in den zarten und gleichzeitig kraftvollen Gedichten ihren Ausdruck findet. Beispielsweise bezieht Lasker-Schüler sich in ihren Gedichten häufig auf das Hohelied, ihr lyrisches Ich ist oft einsam, deshalb werden die Vorstellung einer Liebesnacht und Sehnsucht nach dem Geliebten thematisiert. Dies ist auch der Fall in dem Gedicht „Zebaoth", das Marie Under 1918 übersetzt hat und das sich stark an das Hohelied anlehnt: „Meine erste Blüte Blut sehnt sich nach dir, / So komme doch, / Du süßer

Gott" (Lasker-Schüler 1991: 50). Tief verwandt mit diesen Texten erscheint z.B. Marie Unders Gedicht „Milline öö" (Was für eine Nacht), in dem auch sie das Leiden an der Abwesenheit des Geliebten thematisiert (‚Du irgendwo da draußen'). Die lyrische Heldin ruft nach ihm und verspricht sich von einer Liebesnacht die Erfüllung aller Sehnsüchte und Träume (‚ach was könnte werden aus dieser Nacht für uns zwei') (Under 1984: 70) Nicht umsonst wurden Unders Gedichte aus der Zeit um 1920 als „celebration of erotic love" ([3], am 30.03.06]) bezeichnet.

Expressionistische Liebeslyrik (aus männlicher Sicht) vertreten in Unders Sammlung die Gedichte Paul Boldts (1885–1921): „Proserpina", „Magav Erna" („Die schlafende Erna"), „Himurus" („Sinnlichkeit") und „Sügistunne" („Herbstgefühl") (Under 1920a: 116–119). In Boldts Gedichten (besonders in der „Sinnlichkeit") geht es nicht um die subtile Liebesdichtung, sondern um pure Sexualität, in etwas derben erotischen Phantasien findet das lyrische Ich die Erfüllung seiner Triebe und Sehnsüchte (vgl. Anz, Stark: 1994, 56–57). Als Gegengewicht für die sinnliche Erotik fungierte für viele Expressionisten die große, reine und heilige Liebe, die als Ideal und Erlösung angesehen wurde. Auch diese Art von Liebeslyrik ist in Unders Auswahl vertreten: Sie übersetzte „Oodid Irenele" („Oden an Irene"), „Kaelusta mind" („Umarme mich") und „Olen kaotand oma naise" („Ich habe sie verloren") (Under 1920a: 134–138) von Klabund (mit bürgerlichem Namen Alfred Henschke, 1890–1928). Die hohe, ideale Liebe stellen auch die Gedichte Kurt Heynickes (1891–1985) „Keetsemani aid" ("Gethsemane") und „Südaööl" ("In der Mitte der Nacht") dar (ib. 139–140). Bei Heynickes Gedichten findet sich also zusätzlich ein sehr starker religiöser Bezug. Da Under für diese Art von Lyrik nur wenige Beispiele ausgewählt hat, lässt sich behaupten, dass es sich hierbei nur um die Intention handelte, dem Leser auch solche Art von Lyrik zu präsentieren, ohne dass die Dichterin sich selbst davon wesentlich beeinflussen ließ.

Mit einer relativ großen Auswahl (8 Texte) sind in Unders Sammlung auch die Gedichte Franz Werfels (1890–1945) vertreten. Von Werfel hat Under folgende Texte übersetzt: „Võõrad oleme" („Fremde sind wir auf der Erde alle"), „Üks õhtulaul" („Ein Abendgesang"), „Need kirglikud" („Die Leidenschaftlichen"),

„Malöör“ („Das Malheur”), „Luziferi õhtulaul“ („Luzifers Abendlied”), „Ussi romanss“ („Schlangenromanze“), „Puhastuse palve“ („Gebet um Sammlung”) und „Sõda“ („Der Krieg”) (Under 1920a: 64–82). Charakteristisch für diese Auswahl ist die Verwendung einer sehr pathetischen Dichtersprache, die auch „extatisches Sprechen” genannt wird und oft von religiösen Motiven durchdrungen ist. Laut Anz und Stark basiert das „extatische Sprechen” auf ästhetischen Theorien Friedrich Nietzsches, die Pathetik als ‚verbale Äußerung des unmittelbar empfundenen Lebens‘ sieht (Anz/Stark 1994: 572–574). Für Werfel, wie auch für andere Expressionisten ist charakteristisch, dass der Dichter zu den Mitteln der Pathetik greift, wenn er Empfindungen seiner sich in einem Extremzustand befindenden Seele beschreiben will (z.B. in „Gebet der Sammlung“ spürt das lyrische Ich seine Zerrissenheit und möchte aus diesem Zustand gerettet werden. Manchmal wird extatisches Sprechen verwendet, um innere Spannungen des Ichs abzuladen (wie in „Ein Abendgesang”) oder um eine unmittelbare Reaktion auf seine Umgebung darzustellen (“Der Krieg”). Extase und Pathetik charakterisieren auch die Auswahl Unders aus dem Werk von Johannes R. Becher: „Sissejuhatus“ („Eingang”), „Ühele noormehele“ („An einen Jüngling”), „Lokomotiivid“ („Lokomotiven”), „Kaebe ja küsimus“ („Klage und Frage”) und „Palve nelipühil 1917“ („Pfingstgebet 1917”) (Under 1920a: 158–172). Bechers Gedichte verdeutlichen noch eine expressionistische Eigenart: Besonders in der letzten Dichtung benutzt der Dichter sehr kurze, elliptische Sätze, in denen das Subjekt oder sogar das Verb weggelassen wurde und die stakkatoartig aufeinander folgen. Einerseits erzeugen solche sprachlichen Mittel den Eindruck einer sehr schnellen Bewegung, andererseits steigert dies die Intensität der beschriebenen Empfindungen bis zu einer (sprachlichen) Extase hin.

Auch in Unders Lyrik, besonders in der Sammlung *Verivalla* (1919–1920), finden sich zahlreiche Beispiele des „extatischen Sprechens”, z.B. in „Appihüüd“ (Hilfeschrei) wird Gott angerufen und die auswegslose Situation auf der Erde geschildert, mit der Bitte, dass er helfen rmöge: ‚Mit meinen Lippen rufen Dich die Lippen von Millionen!‘ (Under 1984: 83). Ein sehr gutes Beispiel wäre auch das Gedicht „Vaikus“ (Die Stille): „Oo vaikus tuhathuuline, minus on

enneolematu kuulatamine! Oo pimedus tuhatsilmine, minus on suur vaatamine!" (Übers.: „O du Stille mit tausend Lippen, in mir ist ein nie dagewesenes Aufhorchen! O du Dunkelheit mit tausend Augen, in mir ist ein großes Schauen!")[1] (ib. 90).

Von Ernst Stadler (1883–1914) übersetzte Under folgende Gedichte: „Päeva lõpp" („Abendschluss"), „Päevad" („Tage"), „Sõit üle Rheini silla Kölni juures öösel" („Fahrt über die Kölner Rheinbrücke bei Nacht"), „Raskejalgsed" ("Die Schwangern") und „Lõpp" („Untergang") (Under 1920a: 97–104). Diese Auswahl korrespondiert auf der formalen Ebene mit den Beispielen aus dem Werk von folgenden Autoren: Georg Trakl (1887–1914) und Ernst Wilhelm Lotz (1890–1914). Außer der ebenfalls pathetischen Sprache charakterisiert diese die Verwendung von langen, ungereimten Verszeilen. Trakls Gedichte in dieser Sammlung „Laul" („Gesang des Abgeschiedenen"), „Rahu ja vaikus" („Ruh und Schweigen"), „Inimsus" („Menschheit"), „Pasunad" („Trompeten"), „De profundis" (ib. 105–111) vertreten damit seine letzte Schaffensperiode, in der seine Dichtersprache zunehmend hermetischer wird und lange, hymnische Verszeilen vorherrschen. Auch Lotz' Gedicht „Hiilgelaul" („Glanzgesang") weist lange Verse und hermetischen Inhalt auf. Insbesondere bei Trakl handelt es sich bei diesen Beispielen um den expressionistischen Reihungs- bzw. Zeilenstil, auch Simultantechnik genannt. Es handelt sich um eine Technik, bei der jede Verszeile (manchmal auch zwei Zeilen) jeweils eine semantische bzw. grammatische Einheit bilden, dabei werden die zu beschreibenden Objekte durch einen anonymen Sprecher dargestellt, dessen Blickwinkel den kontextuellen Zusammenhang der Dichtung stiftet (Schneider 1978: 116–117).

Solche Stilelemente finden sich auch in Unders Werk aus der Zeit um 1920. In den Sammlungen *Verivalla* (1919–1920) und *Pärisosa* (1920–1922) bilden Gedichte, die aus langen, hymnischen Verszeilen bestehen, sogar den Großteil. Außer den Parallelen im verstechnischen Bereich weisen Unders Gedichte auch inhaltliche Verwandtschaft mit den Gedichten Stadlers, Trakls oder Lotz' auf. Teilweise handelt es sich um Texte, deren Inhalt etwas kryptisch erscheint und die dadurch direkt mit Unders Trakl-Übersetzungen

[1] Diese und die folgenden Übersetzungen sind von der Autorin. – A.H.

korrespondieren. Beispielsweise in „*A rebours*“ (Under 1984: 86–87) reflektiert das lyrische Ich im ersten Teil des Gedichts über seine innere Unruhe, der Text ist in langen, metrisch korrekten, durch Endreime paarweise gebundenen Verszeilen verfasst: „Ja nii olnd ikka, et und ei iial mu lauge vahele palju mahu. / Ja nii jääb ikka: mu pole rahu, mul pole rahu, mul pole rahu.” (Übers.: „Es war immer so, dass es für den Schlaf unter meinen Lidern kaum Raum gab. / Und es bleibt so: ich habe keine Ruhe, ich habe keine Ruhe, ich habe keine Ruhe.”). Im zweiten Teil der Dichtung wird die Intensität der Empfindungen gesteigert (z.B. durch drastische Bilder, in denen das Menschenherz mit einem geschlagenen Hund verglichen wird), die Endreime verschwinden, stattdessen erscheinen Binnenreime. Die klare Struktur des ersten Teils gerät ins Schwanken und im dritten Teil wird sie ganz zerstört. Die Binnenreime kommen dort nur vereinzelt vor, der Wortschatz hinterlässt einen hermetischen Eindruck (“keel puret uhma nõelhambulisist nirkidest”) und weist gleichzeitig eine hochgradige Emotionalität auf. Aus der anfänglichen inneren Unruhe wird am Ende eine tiefe und quälende Traurigkeit, die in eine Wahnvorstellung zu münden scheint. Auch in Trakls Gedicht „*De profundis*“ geht es um die Verlassenheit des lyrischen Ichs, das sich dadurch verängstigt und verfolgt fühlt und dies durch chiffrierte Bilder ausdrückt: „Auf meine Stirne tritt kaltes Metall. / Spinnen suchen mein Herz. / Es ist ein Licht, das meinen Mund erlöscht” (Trakl 1984: 30) In Gedichten wie „Inspiratsioon“ (“Inspiration”) (Under 1984: 95–96) macht sich aber eher der Einfluss Stadlers bemerkbar. Es ist ein Gedicht, das in langzeiligen Versen geschrieben wurde, wobei diese Verse (genau wie bei Stadler) oft aus mehreren kurzen Ausrufen bestehen: „Ah, mis on eile, täna? Üürike. Kui vähe see. Oo, igavik, see olgu päralt igaühe:” (Übers.: „Ach, was ist gestern, heute? Ein Augenblick. Wie wenig das ist. O Ewigkeit, sie werde allen zuteil:”) Auch das Reflektieren über ein abstraktes Thema unter Benutzung des religiös besetzten Wortschatzes (‚Ostern‘, ‚Gelobtes Land‘) lässt die Verbindung zu Stadler entstehen.

Weiterhin werden in Unders Dichtung um 1920 verschiedene, auch für den deutschen Expressionismus charakteristische Themen sichtbar. Beispielsweise mutet in Unders Dichtung die Einsetzung

der Ästhetik des Hässlichen expressionistisch an. Dieses Verständnis von der Kunst entstand etwa um 1900 und es basierte auf den Werken von Baudelaire, der Erscheinungen wie Hässlichkeit, Verwesung etc. faszinierend fand und Rimbaud, der die umgebende Realität als eine Art Hölle darstellte. Gerade Rimbaud hatte den deutschen Frühexpressionismus tief beeinflusst (Eykman 1965: 8–13). Die Ästhetik des Hässlichen, genannt auch „Theorie der Abjektion" (Kristeva 1980), will die schöne Oberfläche zerstören und das unschöne Wesen von Sachen oder Personen bloßstellen. Dadurch entstehen in der Literatur schockierende Bilder, die im Leser Angst und Ekel hervorrufen (Anz, Stark 1994: 163–168). Im deutschen Expressionismus ist dieser Zug besonders stark bei Gottfried Benn (1886–1956), dem Dichter mit medizinischer Ausbildung, vertreten. Besonders prägnant ist sein Gedicht „Mann und Frau gehen durch die Krebsbaracke", das auch von Under übersetzt wurde (*Mees ja naine lähevad läbi vähjahaigete baraki*) und das mit dem zweiten Gedicht „Kleine Aster" (*Väike aster*) eine schmale, aber repräsentative Auswahl aus dem Werk dieses Schriftstellers bildet (Under 1920a: 123–125).

Auch Under gibt das Grausame manchmal mit erschreckender Echtheit wider. Manche von ihren lyrischen Texten um 1920 tragen geradezu naturalistische Züge, z.B. im Gedicht „Verivalla" (Offene Wunde) heißt es: „Koolnute verised pärjad närtsivad mägede jalal, / korjuste kollased kondid kurbuvad orgude varjus, / kaarnatiib katuseks rinna pehastand talal. / Sorivad linde porised nokad huuli sinikais marjus." (Übers. „Blutige Kränze der Toten welken am Fuß der Berge / Gelbe Knochen der Leichen liegen traurig im Schatten des Tals, / Krähenflügel als Dach auf dem maroden Pfeiler der Brust./ Schlammige Schnäbel der Vögel graben in den blauen Beeren der Lippen." (Under 1984: 82) Dieser Text ist natürlich auch ein gutes Beispiel für den Reihungstil in Unders Lyrik. Des weiteren beschreibt sie auch detailliert verschiedene Krankheiten und Leiden, die ebenfalls mit der expressionistischen Ästhetik des Hässlichen in Verbindung gebracht werden können (Metzler 2003: 162–190). Im Gedicht „Laatsarused" ("Lazarusse") stellt sie Menschen dar, die im Krieg verkrüppelt wurden und nun ein menschenunwürdiges Dasein fristen (Under 1984: 108).

Mit dem Expressionismus ist auch das Auftauchen der Großstadtmotive im Werk Unders zu verbinden. Zum Beispiel im Gedicht „Hämar linn“ (Dunkle Stadt) heißt es: „Reas rügemendid: hoonte hallid massid, / silm silma vastu seismas nende vall, / kus nukralt virilduvad ärklite grimassid” (Under 1984: 73). (Übers.: „Wie Regimente stehen in der Reihe die grauen Massen der Gebäude, / dicht beieinander stehen ihre Gemäuer, / traurig schneiden Grimasse die Erker.”) Diese Darstellung erinnert an viele Gedichte von deutschen Expressionisten, besonders an die, in denen sich Literatur und bildende Kunst vereinen. Die unbewegten Objekte werden in diesen Texten in Bewegung gesetzt, so dass eine Verzerrung der Konturen entsteht und ansonsten vertraute Objekte durch eine verfremdete Perspektive gezeigt werden. Es ist ein auch in der deutschen expressionistischen Dichtung sehr oft anzutreffender Wesenszug (Schneider 1967: 26–29). Etwa die Auswahl aus der Lyrik Georg Heyms (1887–1912) oder Alfred Wolfensteins (1888–1945) bieten hierzu hervorragende Beispiele. Von Heym übersetzte Under die Gedichte „Umbra vitae“, „Surnukambris“ („Die Morgue”), „Hullud“ („Die Verrückten”), „Agulis“ (“Die Vorstadt”), „Pime“ (“Der Blinde”), „Kolumbus“ (“Columbus”) (Under 1920a: 45–63) und von Wolfenstein „Loomamaja“ („Bestienhaus”), „Linlased“ („Städter”) (ib. 120–122). Wie bei diesen zwei Dichtern erscheint die Stadt auch in Unders Gedichten als Moloch, als ein Konglomerat von feuchten und dunklen Gassen, in denen sich etwas lichtscheues Volk eingenistet hat, oder als ein grelles Licht in der Dunkelheit, das nachtfalterartige Wesen in Scharen anzieht. In der Dichtung *Tänaval* (Auf der Straße) etwa kommen diese Aspekte sehr gut zur Geltung: „Ees aknad sompund nagu silmad nilbed. / See tänavate soonestik, kus hooneid tõuseb kuuni, / siin oled nagu torni sulet, ummikusse uhut, / kui leht, mis oksalt rebit, kõrbe puhut. (...) Pääl katuste nii kaugel taeva ahtakene viir kui pilge.” (Übers. Vor dir die Fenster wie vollüstige Augen. / Diese Adern der Straßen, wo die Gebäude in den Himmel steigen, / hier bist du wie in den Turm eingefangen, / wie ein Blatt, gerissen vom Ast und in die Wüste geweht. (...) Über den Dächern, so fern, ein schmales Stück vom Himmel, wie Hohn.”) (Under 1984: 106). Heym und Wolfenstein,

beide große Gestalten des Expressionismus, bezogen sich in ihrer Lyrik auch vielfach auf die Ästhetik des Hässlichen.

Besonders im Spätexpressionismus (ab ca. 1918) herrscht die Kriegsthematik vor, es wird über den Krieg bzw. dessen Folgen reflektiert und dadurch eine gedankliche Bewältigungsarbeit geleistet. Es sind Impressionen des Kriegsgeschehens, manchmal wird sogar der eigene Tod geschildert. Doch am meisten appellieren die Expressionisten pazifistisch an die Brüderlichkeit aller Menschen und hoffen auf die Erlösung aus der Verwirrung, Brutalität und Angst (Vietta 1990: 118–119).

Auch in Unders Anthologie ist dieses Thema stark präsentiert, was sicherlich mit dem zeitlichen Kontext zusammenhängt: Auch im Baltikum herrschten nach dem Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs politische Wirren, chaotische Zustände, gewisse Resignation und Verzweiflung. Das Kriegsthema präsentieren in Unders Anthologie mehrere Autoren. Am stärksten zeichnet es sich jedoch bei Albert Ehrenstein (1886–1950) aus. Von ihm wählte Under folgende Gedichte: „Häda" ("Leid"), „Ahastus" ("Verzweiflung"), „Valu" ("Schmerz"), „Rändai" ("Der Wanderer"), „Sõjajumal" ("Der Kriegsgott") (Under 1920a: 126–131). Diese Texte setzen sich mit einem schweren Thema auseinander, den seelische Folgen, die der Krieg bei einem ehemaligen Soldaten hinterlassen hat. Auch die Auswahl aus der Lyrik von Ernst Blass (1890–1939) bezieht sich stark auf die Kriegsthematik: *Tsüklist „Leitenant F.H. S-le"* ("Leutenant F.S.H.") *Tsüklist „Muutus"* ("Verwandlung") (Under 1920a: 141–144). Adolf von Hatzfelds (1892–1957) Gedicht „Roheline suvi" ("Grüner Sommer") (ib. 132–133) kann ebenfalls dazu gezählt werden. In den Dichtungen Unders, die um 1920 verfasst sind, spiegelt sich oft die Kriegsthematik wider, z. B. in dem „Lazarusse", das oben schon erwähnt wurde. Mit diesem Text korrespondiert direkt auch das Gedicht „Sõjapimedad" (Kriegsblinden) (Under 1984: 109–110), das sich mit der Sinnlosigkeit des Kriegs auseinandersetzt.

Ein wichtiges Thema, worüber besonders im Spätexpressionismus reflektiert wird, ist die Ankunft des Neuen Menschen. „Je vernichtender die Erfahrung der modernen Zivilisation, des Krieges, des Nihilismus, um so emphatischer wird die Erneuerung des Menschen, wird eine neue Sinngebung des Daseins durch eine in

Brüderlichkeit geeinte Menschheit beschworen." (Vietta 1990: 217) Häufig enthalten solche Gedichte einen starken politischen Bezug, d.h. die politisch motivierten Expressionisten drängten in ihren Gedichten zu einer aktivistisch-pazifistischen Betätigung, weshalb ihnen von manchen Kritikern die Tendenz zu einem ‚undifferezierten Sozialismus' vorgeworfen (ib. 219). Diese Kategorie vertreten in Unders Anthologie die Gedichte von Walter Hasenclever (1890–1940) „Sa vaim, kes minu jätsid" ("Du Geist, der mich verließ"), „Poliitiline luuletai" ("Der politische Dichter") (Under 1920a: 145–151).

Auch in Unders Gedichten klingen solche Motive an. Beispielsweise „Noorte laul" (Gesang der Jugend) (Under 1984: 103–104) erscheint wie ein strahlendes Manifest der jungen Menschen, die dort als Erneuerer oder gar Erlöser der ganzen Welt präsentiert werden. Die Dynamik und Energie dieser Menschen wird durch eindrucksvolle Bilder (‚Wir kommen, strahlend vom Morgenlicht und erfüllt durch den schmelzenden Frühling') mitreißend geschildert. Am Ende stehen die Jugendlichen sogar wie Lichtgestalten da, die eine messianische Zukunftsvision verkörpern: „Inimsoo sillaks me säet: meie on tulevik! Noorus on püha!" (Übers.: „Wir sind die Brücke der Menschheit: Wir sind die Zukunft! Heilig ist die Jugend!").

Und doch erklingen in den Gedichten vieler Expressionisten eine gewisse Resignation und die Einsamkeit und Ortlosigkeit des modernen Menschen. Die Entwicklung der modernen Technologie vermittelte dem vereinzelten Ich das Gefühl, einem verselbstständigten System gegenüberzustehen, in dem es selbst funktionslos geworden ist (Vietta 1990: 3). Dieses Gefühl spricht vielfach auch aus den Gedichten von Yvan (auch: Iwan) Goll, eigentl. Isaac Lang, (1891–1950). Von ihm übersetzte Under folgende Gedichte: „Imikud" ("Säuglinge"), „Teekond viletsusse" ("Reise ins Elend"), „Igatsuse karavaan" ("Karawane der Sehnsucht"), „Palveneitsid" („Betende Jungfrauen"), „Varieteeneeger" („Variété-Neger") und „Allik" („Quelle") (Under 1920a: 152–157).

In Unders Dichtung aus der Zeit um 1920 finden sich ebenfalls einzelne Texte, die die Verlorenheit des menschlichen Ichs thematisieren. Beispielsweise in „Tühjad tunnid" (Leere Stunden)

(Under 1984: 118) wird das leere Dasein eines sich selbst fremd gewordenen Ichs geschildert: „Ons see minu oma suu, / mis neid surnud sõnu poetab?" (Übers.: „Ist dies mein eigener Mund, / der diese leeren Wörter fallen lässt?"). Dennoch wird am Ende des Gedichts die Hoffnung geäußert, dass die Gegenwart, die als schwer und erdrückend empfunden wird, aus der Erstarrung erwacht und dadurch auch dem Sprecher ein neues Leben einhaucht.

Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen, dass obwohl in Marie Unders frühem Schaffen inhaltlich noch weitere expressionistische Momente zu finden sind, die Dichterin von der Struktur her einer strengen Form treu bleibt und sie nicht zerstört wie viele deutsche Expressionisten es taten. Selbst ihre freirhythmischen Gedichte aus jener Zeit haben eine klare Struktur und eine strenge formelle Ordnung (Rannit 1949: 6). Doch die Überschreitung der sprachlichen Grenzen, d.h. Vermittlung des Fremden in die eigene Muttersprache, hat die Lyrik der jungen Marie Under in diesen Jahren nachhaltig beeinflusst. Dabei ist es nicht ganz korrekt, bei Under in diesem Falle über das „Eigene" und das „Fremde" zu sprechen, denn in ihren Gedichten, geschrieben um 1920 ist noch sehr deutlich der deutsche „Boden" spürbar. Dies zeigt sich etwa im Satzbau, der teilweise deutlich der deutschen Syntax nachempfunden ist oder im Wortschatz, der etliche deutsche Lehnwörter enthält. Die um 1920 geschriebene Gedichte spielen in ihrem Gesamtschaffen eine wichtige Rolle und doch haftet an der Importierung des Expressionismus in Unders estnische Dichtung etwas künstliches. Dies ist eigentlich nur logisch, denn, wie Lukas richtig vermerkt, fehlte in dieser Zeit in den baltischen Provinzen für die Wahrnehmung moderner literarischen Diskurse der richtige soziokulturelle Kontext (Lukas 2001: 247). Schon Fr. Tuglas bemerkte, dass es in Estland damals die ‚intelligente Stadtkultur' fehlte und dass ‚der Geist der Stadt' erst im Entstehen war, deshalb hat die junge estnische Literatur sich die kulturellen Stimmungen der großen Welt eher theoretisch, durch fremde Literatur und Kultur angeeignet (Tuglas 1996: 52, Lukas 2001: 248). Es scheint, als ob auch Under um jeden Preis etwas wirklich Modernes schaffen wollte, was ihr mit der Einbindung der expressionistischen Motiven in ihre Lyrik durchaus gelungen ist.

Doch schon bald wendet sich Under zu anderen Stoffen und Motiven, um eine eigene poetische Sprache zu finden.

Zum Schluss müssen noch ein paar wichtige Aspekte bezüglich der betrachteten Anthologie erwähnt werden. Es wäre zu betonen, dass es sich auf jeden Fall um ausgezeichnete Übersetzungen handelt. Under hat sich um eine möglichst große Originaltreue bemüht und meistens ist es ihr gelungen, besonders im verstechnischen Bereich. Dennoch scheint sie sich wegen einiger Details rechtfertigen zu müssen und erklärt sie im Nachwort dieser Anthologie dem (unwissenden) Leser, dass etwaige Verstöße gegen die Gesetze des Reims und Metrums mit den Besonderheiten der Originale zu tun haben. Auch im Wortschatz hat Under meistens dem jeweiligen Originalwort ein möglichst nahes Äquivalent gefunden. Dies hat zu überraschenden Wortkombinationen geführt, die auf Estnisch innovativ und erfrischend wirken, z.B. übersetzt sie „Zischwind" (Trakl) mit „sahituul" (Under 1920a: 111), also benutzt sie ein onomatopoetisches Wort genau an der Stelle wie das Original. Sehr interessant ist auch ihre Übersetzung des Lasker-Schülerschen Gedichts „Höre!". Under gibt diesem Gedicht auf Estnisch den Titel „Kuule" (ohne Ausrufezeichen) (ib. 94), was eigentlich zweifach gelesen werden kann: als „höre!" und als „an den Mond", was dem übersetzten Gedicht eine zusätzliche Dimension verleiht. An manchen Stellen hat Under jedoch den Sinn des Originalwortes etwas geändert. Den Titel „Sinnlichkeit" (Boldt) (ib. 118) übersetzt sie als „himurus", d.h. statt eines Wortes, das in der Originalsprache neutrale Bedeutung hat, wählt sie eines, das in der Zielsprache etwas negativ gefärbt ist und verdeutlicht damit die dunkle, animalische Seite der Liebeslyrik Boldts. Den Titel „Bestienhaus" (Wolfenstein) (ib. 120) hat sie aber im Estnischen etwas gemildert und ein neutrales Wort „Loomamaja" gewählt: Möglicherweise mutete die direkte Übersetzung „Elajate maja" etwas zu derb an. Das heißt, Under hat sich zwar um Originaltreue bemüht, aber manchmal auch einiges hinsichtlich der Klarheit oder dem Geschmack des potentiellen Lesers geändert.

Etwas kritisch muss jedoch hinzugefügt werden, dass Unders Auswahl der expressionistischen Dichter und Gedichte manchmal zufällig wirkt. Sie bringt Beispiele aus dem Werk wirklich

repräsentativer Dichter wie Heym, Stadler, Trakl u.a. Jedoch solche großen Gestalten des Expressionismus wie Jakob van Hoddis, Alfred Lichtenstein, August Stramm oder Paul Zech sind nicht in ihre Anthologie aufgenommen worden. Dafür sind einige Schriftsteller, die in der großen Strömung des Expressionismus eher Randfiguren blieben, vertreten (wie Hatzfeld) oder Dichter, dessen beste Tage zu Unders Zeit schon vorbei waren (Blass). Ebenso erscheint auch die Auswahl der Gedichte etwas fraglich: Bei Lasker-Schüler handelt es sich hier z.T. um bekannte Gedichte (wie „Mein Liebeslied"), die berühmtesten Texte jedoch (wie „Ein alter Tibetteppich") sind nicht ausgewählt worden. Dasselbe gilt auch für Blass: Das Gedicht „An Gladys", das ihn berühmt machte, wurde nicht aufgenommen. Von Gottfried Benn dagegen hat Under nur zwei Beispiele, dafür gehören diese zur absoluten Spitze der Lyrik Benns. Bei Georg Trakl handelt es zwar um bekannte Texte, die Auswahl wirkt jedoch etwas einseitig, denn es werden nur Gedichte aus der letzten Schaffensperiode dieses Dichters übersetzt. Es scheint, dass Under bei einigen Dichtern einen thematischen Schwerpunkt setzen wollte (wie bei Lasker-Schüler), bei einigen ging sie bei ihrer Auswahl von stilistischen Kriterien aus (Trakl). Bei Johannes R. Becher handelt es sich um weniger bekannte Gedichte, die aufgenommenen Texte bilden aber einen ausgezeichneten thematisch-stilistischen Schlusspunkt für Unders Anthologie. Dazu muss vermerkt werden, dass viele estnische Dichter die Lyrik Bechers generell sehr schätzten. Johannes Semper etwa hat in seinen Überblicksartikeln vielfach auf Becher hingewiesen und seine Gedichte übersetzt (Semper 1918). Under begründet ihre Auswahl mit der Knappheit des Materials, denn es sei schwer zu jener Zeit gewesen, Bücher aus dem Ausland zu bekommen. „Deshalb ist diese Auswahl nicht so vollkommen und übersichtlich, wie am Anfang geplant." (Under 1920a: 175). Dem könnte man natürlich entgegensetzen, dass sie sich sehr stark an die Anthologie von Kurt Pinthus „Menschheitsdämmerung" bezogen hat: Die Beispiele aus der Lyrik Albert Ehrensteins etwa entstammen komplett diesem Buch. Das heißt, sie hätte eigentlich genug Material gehabt. Deshalb kann man vermuten, dass Under die Entscheidung über die Aufnahme in ihre Anthologie vorwiegend nach ihrem persönlichen Geschmack traf. Doch obwohl

einiges bei dieser Sammlung von unserem heutigen Standpunkt aus etwas merkwürdig erscheint, handelt es sich für die damalige Zeit um höchst aktuelle Texte, die entweder aus der berühmten Anthologie „Menschheitsdämmerung" (1919) oder aus den Gedichtbänden verschiedener Autoren, die alle 1918–1919 erschienen, stammen. Damit hat Marie Under einen bedeutenden Beitrag zum radikalen Erneuerungsprogramm der estnischen Literatur geleistet und sie möglicherweise ein Stück näher nach Europa, dem Ziel der damaligen Intellektuellen, gebracht.

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The Images of Town and Countryside in the Poetry of Heiti Talvik[1]

KATRIN ENNUS

Heiti Talvik (1904–1947) was a member, often even called the intellectual leader of a circle of young Estonian poets called Arbujad (the Soothsayers). Arbujad were not united by an explicit literary manifesto but considered themselves modestly a group of friends who – regardless of their in some aspects quite different literary production – shared some basic principles on the nature of literary art, its functions and the role of poet. They mainly stressed that a poet must be completely free in his expression, he should neither follow the subjects of daily politic life nor should he put himself at the service of some distinct ideology. The only rules the poet must obey are the intrinsic rules of poetry itself. In the name of perfect aesthetic achievement the poet may even sacrifice his life, as has written Betti Alver, another distinguished poet of this circle: in one of her poems she depicts an artist who in a desire to get a perfect painting of a lion, decides to enter the lion cage not knowing if he will survive or not. (Alver 2005: 132)

In those aspirations this group of poets is by Estonian literary critics sometimes considered somewhat of an equivalent to the European art for art's sake movement and an opposition to another tendency in the Estonian literature of the 1930s, namely to the more or less realistic or naturalistic authors who tried to be, as it was said, close to life and among whom quite many wrote in accordance with

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the official propaganda of Estonian government, praising physical labour and the brave farmers and in this way trying to strengthen national consciousness of Estonians.

It is quite arguable how justified it is to see in Heiti Talvik and his adherents only the pupils of the French Parnassian poets such as Théophile Gautier and others striving to perfect, sculpturally calm forms as, despite of Talvik's unconditional subjection to the severe demands of art, he nevertheless starts to see the aims of art outside the art itself. For him art becomes sort of an epistemological tool to sense the true meaning and depths of life and being a poet acquires so an ethic value.

But even more frequent and obviously more justified are the cases of comparing Heiti Talvik with another legendary French poet, Charles Baudelaire; so far the most extensive, although too general treatment of this subject is Aleksander Aspel's lecture "Baudelaire and the poetry of Heiti Talvik" held in the academic year 1968–1969. Talvik himself has admitted that when he started to write he was under great influence of Baudelaire, but later his interests changed, as he himself said, his preferences turned from decadent authors to classics, for example Dante (Kaelas 1936: 8). This evolution and movement in his thought and expression – from decadent anxiety and self-torturing to a much more balanced and harmonious view of life – is also traceable in his poetry.

Talvik and the other members of Arbujad are considered to represent in Estonian literature the same phenomenon which in Europe is called modernism, but it stems from quite different contexts. Modernism is unanimously seen as being essentially related to urban and industrial environment but we can't speak of real cities in Estonia in the 1920s and 1930s. The urbanization had taken place and was slowly continuing (in 1934 29 % of Estonian population lived in towns) but Estonian towns, which didn't have high buildings and consisted mostly of 1–2–storeyed wooden houses, are not comparable with the European cities with populations of several millions, for example in 1934 Tallinn was the only town in Estonia that had more than 100, 000 inhabitants, in Tartu this number was 58, 876 and in Pärnu, the hometown of Talvik, 20 334. (Pullat 1978: 78, 81–83, 118) Besides, if to rely on contemporary fiction, moving

from the countryside to the towns didn't always have the most enviable reputation among the farmers: for example in one of the most important epopee in Estonian literature, A. H. Tammsaare's "Tõde ja õigus", written at the same epoch, one of the leit-motives is the ironic assertion that sending one's son to town means that he will become a horse thief.

Consequently, when speaking of modernism in Estonian literature from Noor-Eesti to Arbujad the intertextual contexts, as reading Baudelaire for example, have an important role, the experience of the real city life comes more through the texts than through personal experience. The fact was already claimed by Friedebert Tuglas in 1912 when he wrote that the time of realism depicting the farm and village life is over and a new, urban and intelligent culture is about to be born, but he admitted that Estonians are only theoretically Europeans because the urban atmosphere and city moods are here known indirectly, through education and foreign literature (Tuglas 1996: 445). During the next decades the situation changed of course noticeably, both with regard to the socio-economic sphere as well as the respective developments in the artistic sensibility, psychology and use of language, but still it is obvious that Estonian towns did not reach the same intensity of virtues and vices accompanying urbanization in great cities like Paris, London or New York.

What concerns Heiti Talvik, it is not known that he had travelled abroad. He lived mostly in two Estonian towns: in Pärnu, a beautiful small resort town by the Baltic Sea where he was born, and in Tartu where he came to study in the university and where he staid for the rest of his life. Bernard Kangro, one of Talvik's fellow young poets, remembers that Talvik liked hiking very much. For example in the beginning of summer he often walked from Tartu to his hometown Pärnu, which is 178 km away, and not always choosing the most direct way. (Kangro 1981: 77) Impressions gathered from those tours have inspired some of his most optimistic poems.

In Talvik's first poems the representation of location is more concrete than in his later poems, it means, when speaking of his early poems – poems written before 1934 – the question "where it takes place" has an answer and makes more often sense then when speaking of his later poems. Regarding the aspect of location and its

connection with the moods of lyrical I, we can in general distinguish 5 types of poems.

First the poems which give us no indication of location, they treat several more or less abstract themes without putting them in concrete surroundings. The number of that sort of poems in Talvik's creation grows in time.

Secondly the poems which are near to the first group, namely, in quite a lot of poems we can from some hints deduce that the speaker isn't a farmer or a miner but somebody who lives in the town, for example in the poem "Pihtimuskilde" ("Fragments of a Confession", 1928) it is mentioned that when looking out of his window he sees the roofs of other buildings (Talvik 1988: 87), sometimes the lyrical I is positioned in a town by the sea, like in "Before the Thunderstorm" ("Eel äikest", 1924) – it seems to be a similar person to the real Talvik himself –, but in this group of poems the town is only the modest and discreet decoration, it is not thematisized and doesn't acquire independent importance.

Thirdly, some poems which are written in a youthfully light and cheerful mood. They are few because young Talvik is mostly tormented by decadent spleen and anguish, but if there are some optimistic moments, which are only slightly touched by melancholy, then such moments are always connected with the countryside (often specially with the sea, like in the "Legendary" ("Legendaarne", 1925)) physical movement and openness. For example in the poem "Spring song" ("Kevadelaul", 1924) he says that while in the woods and mountains the pain inside of him abates (Talvik 1988: 11). Or when describing the girl who he loved so much the source of all the metaphors or comparisons is nature: the girl's limbs smell like white birches, her look is clear as a spring where the lyrical I can still his thirst like a lark *etc* (Talvik 1988: 18).

These poems don't contain explicitly the opposite negative pole, the freedom and hope felt walking in the countryside is not directly opposed to anything although it is quite easy to add this negative counterpart implicitly because in his most depressed texts – so to say – the "action takes place" in the town. But in this group of poems, which would be the fourth in my division, we would neither meet the trivial, perhaps even expected town-countryside opposition. In fact,

in one of his earliest poems "Dusk" ("Videvik", 1924) which is not included in either of his collections of poems but what is in this aspect very exemplary, Talvik dismisses this as too naive. The lonely, physically sick and extremely sad speaker is positioned in the park somewhere in the suburbs from where he glances at the gloomy town down in the valley and depicts it, mentioning the noise of the factories covered with fog that resembles to a snake, the stench of the alcohol store and the screams of drunkards. This introduction is followed by the existential question whether he should return into the black throat of the town where even the light is filthy and hitting the eyes or should he turn around and leave the town, but – unfortunately there is no solution in this direction either, because all he sees there is a grave for him in the swamp or in the ditch. (Talvik 1988: 16–17). Like in the earlier mentioned texts the optimism, the pessimism here is equally overwhelming. Another Talvik's early poem, "Vision" ("Nägemus", 1924), contains a constitutive opposition but this is not spatial, contrasting town and countryside, but temporal, opposing the present state of things to the lost golden past. And the present is of course presented in the example of the unfriendly and spleen generating town where we would meat no human being, only carriages, cars, cranes that make a lot of noise and smog. Suddenly, in the middle of all this oppression and dimness the speaker gets a vision of the order of things in the past: long time ago there used to be an idyllic valley with the silvery spring, limes and oaks, large blue skies over them, an atmosphere absolutely calm and serene, even solemn. (Talvik 1988: 15) In this early poem Talvik introduces the opposition that he uses in several later and more mature poems: the present urban decadence versus the nostalgia of the lost golden age which, relying on some given hints – Talvik mentions temples and market places – could be recognized as some antique Greece or Roman city-state. But even this dichotomy – the present lowness and decadence and the vital and valuable past – doesn't remain always untouched because in one of his cycle of poems, "After the revolution" ("Järel revolutsiooni", 1930–1931), he gives the markers that start creating this scenery of antiquity, and what the reader would expect to be something happy and harmonious, but then shows all that in ruins too (Talvik 1988: 41–42).

But one is sure, if in Talvik's poems the urban surroundings are explicit and thematizised, the lyrical I is not feeling well in this environment. The town is most certainly ugly, foggy, noisy and spleen generating, not offering solutions or remedies to the intrinsic problems. The most the town has to offer is some moments of forgetfulness which can be reached by the aid of alcohol, cigars and cruel and indifferent women wearing red high-heeled shoes. But the price for those sensual, self-forgetful and delirious tango parties is high: when waking up in the next morning the closeness of death and final fall has become more evident (Talvik 1988: 43).

When looking at the relationship of the lyrical I and the town, one more aspect can be noticed. In his first poems it is obvious that the speaker doesn't feel himself part of the urban environment, certainly he lives in town, yet he stays somehow on the distance, contemplating it from the sides, for example, as it was in the aforementioned poem "Dusk", where the speaker walks in a suburban park feeling that he doesn't belong neither to the town nor to the countryside. This image of the park on the edges of the town repeats itself in several of Talvik's poems, being an ambivalent space: not quite the town anymore nor the rural fields and woods, being so in accordance with the ambivalent and confused identity of the speaker who has reached the limits of everything known to him and standing there on the edge, disappointed, tormented and not knowing where to turn to find solutions and new values to admire. In slightly later poems where his depression and anguish are about to culminate, like in "Pariah" ("Paaria") the speaker is already definitely part of the town, completely ruined by urban vices: he has spent all his money in the brothels, has got syphilis and lots of scars from the knife fights, he has long ago lost his job and now the only way to get some money is to steal it on the streets. He is no more the contemplative and lonely walker in the parks but he sneaks in the biggest crowd as a pickpocket and later drinks in the hotel bars in the centre of a town (Talvik 1988: 48–49).

This close connection with the town will loosen in the course of time, to the point of completely disappearing. As already mentioned, in Talvik's later poems we often don't meet the concrete details that would let us determine exactly the space. And parallel to this is the

abating of the internal turmoil, the opening of horizons, understanding that after the grim autumn and the freezing winter follows inevitably the spring with new and fresh blossoms. Not that Talvik would completely change his pessimistic view on the human nature and history and its perspectives but he finds in himself the strength to defy it. When in those new contexts he here and there mentions cities, his relationship with them isn't personal any more. The city is no more the concrete surroundings of his lyrical I where he is tangled and that suffocates him but he has moved to a more abstract level and is dealing with more general problems. For example in one of his cycle of poems ("Dies irae", 1934) he is not dealing so much with a suffering individual but pointing at the general threats over the world and humanity; the city jungles are here seen as the bearers of the bloody sun of the revolution (Talvik 1988: 108). And perhaps it is worth mentioning that now he uses the word "city" (*suurlinn*) instead of "town" (*linn*), obviously being himself aware that in Estonia we didn't have them at this epoch, so he is consciously speaking not any more on such a personally local but on the more universal level.

Before reaching the conclusion the last, fifth group of poems must be shortly described. As mentioned before, we don't meet in Talvik's poetry the simple spatial town and countryside opposition, where the town would have all kind of negative connotations and rural life would offer the redemption. As already hinted in the poem "Dusk" the lyrical I would not find a new life in the fields and woods, instead they could only offer him a wet grave. This subject is treated in more detail in the third part of Talvik's first collection of poems. Here the decadent moods have not disappeared yet, on the contrary, in some way they are reaching their climax, but now the sufferings of an individual are not merged with the gloomy atmosphere of the town, towns are not mentioned here by a word, instead the personal anguish grows here step by step up to the point that all the country is seen in the grasp of death and demise: the windmills have stopped working because there has been a crop failure, the villages are attacked by maddened rats, the farmhouses are full of dying hungry people and on the fields are lying dead bodies which are collected and burnt on huge stakes. The lyrical I, additionally tormented by his personal crises, is looking at all this and decides to leave all the

miseries of the world and to die alone somewhere in the cold waters of a foggy swamp. So, to the third group of poems which offered some gentle and cheerful pictures of country life, met by the lyrical I mostly by passing not by belonging to it, we have here the heavily depressed counterpart.

To conclude it has to be said that in general the poetry of Heiti Talvik reflects the world-view of the urbanized person who is unsatisfied with the present order of things in the world. But we can't say that he would see urbanization as the main reason for this dissatisfaction. This is neither the case in his early poems, where he presents his personal pain, nor in his later texts where he deals with more general topics. We wouldn't find in his poetry the simple spatial opposition of town and countryside, the latter bringing solutions to the problems generated by the former. Of course, it is true that when he depicts a town he sees nothing pleasant: towns for him are noisy, unfriendly, dim, foggy and often corrupt places, and as he has mentioned in several poems, surrounded by walls, it means closed, clearly defined areas where free movement is limited.

The countryside may sometimes offer temporal relief but at the same time it may be the decoration to the utmost doom. Solutions to the problems of the lyrical I don't come, for example through moving to the countryside. We can't say that he has completely lost contact with country life because in his early poems and in some of his very last texts he gets there his rare joyful experiences but it is obvious that he himself doesn't belong there essentially, he is only the passing traveller, on his way from one town to the another. And more importantly, he explicitly says in his poems that his tormented soul wouldn't find peace in the woods and fields, where he can't see the idyllic calm scenes but instead, a few of his most powerful visions of complete disaster are staged in a rural environment.

Consequently, Talvik can't see the way from his decadent and urban anguish to the redemption in the simple movement in space. As mentioned, rather than opposing town and country in his poems, the explicit opposition is generated between the present and the lost age. But as it is obvious that we can't get back the days gone, besides, as shown, their perfection may be more the result of our imagination than a historical fact, so the solutions must be found

inside the lyrical I itself, regardless of his location in concrete space. In Talvik's case it means that one day he discovers that the autumn, his preferred season in early poems, isn't only the culmination of fall and decadence but also the season of fruits.

And finally, if to compare what has been said about European modernist poetry and what occurs when reading Talvik, an interesting discord appears which also happens to slightly undermine the current conviction in Estonian literary criticism which considers Talvik as some sort of local equivalent to Baudelaire. In Talvik's case, as his depression grows so grows his consistency with the concrete town, and when he finds solutions to his intrinsic turmoil, the markers of (urban) environment would leave his texts: the more concrete the pain, the more concrete are the spatial images. This characteristic trait of Talvik's poetry is completely contrary to the European modernist poetry of the city with its great founder Charles Baudelaire, because, as claims G. M. Hyde, in modernist poetry "Cities get less real as they get closer: or as one gets closer to them." (Hyde 1991: 337). Or, as has written Claude Pichois commenting Baudelaire's poem "The Swan" ("Le Cygne"), which is one of the key texts in European modern urban poetry, Baudelaire moves from clarity to mysteriousness (Pichois: 1974: 1004). In those contexts reference is usually made to Baudelaire's verse from "The Swan": "Vieux faubourgs, tout pour moi devient allégorie" (Baudelaire 1975: 86). The beginning of the poem "Seven old men" ("Les sept viellards"): "Fourmillante cité, cité pleine de rèves" (Baudelaire 1975: 87) has the same explanatory and illustrative power. The objects Baudelaire meets in the city activate his imagination that he will very soon dive into his inner world of personal memories, associations and hallucinations to the extent that it is completely impossible to speak of a clear line between them and of a so called objective reality. In Talvik's poetry we would not meet that sort of interfusion of (urban) reality and imagination, on the contrary, in his most depressed texts the reality has the strongest grasp on him and the only alternative to it seems to be death. Baudelaire, often considered as the first poet to express the really modern sensibility, will remain in this unstable and confused and also frightened state as for example in the end of the aforementioned poem "Seven old men":

Vainement ma raison voulait prendre la barre;
La tempête en jouant déroutait ses efforts,
Et mon âme dansait, dansait, vieille gabarre
Sans mats, sur une mer monstrueuse et sans bords!
(Baudelaire 1975: 88)

In Talvik's poetry, in accordance with the already mentioned movement from concreteness to abstraction on the level of spatial images, runs the more general shift from anxiously decadent moods to the more harmonious and, as Talvik himself said, classic (and as could be inferred from this specification, obviously less modern) world view. The moment when he finds this ability to defy all the chaos around him and expresses his belief in the poet's ability to work out the order and sense from it, is depicted in the last part of his cycle of poems "Dies irae" which is sometimes also considered as a sort of manifesto of Arbujad. When Baudelaire's boat is bobbing with no direction because the reason is incapable of grasping the steering wheel, Talvik whoops and demands the contrary:

Hädalipp kas vinnata varda
või alandlik selga küür?
Ei! Kõhklejad kõik üle parda
ja kindlamalt pihku tüür!

Trotsides katastroofi
tormipuskarit rüüpab me laev.
Meie kohus on sundida saledasse stroofi
elementide pime raev.[2] (Talvik 1988: 111)

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[2] Shall we flash on SOS?
Shall we cower, defeaed and humble?
No! Let go by the board those who flinch with distress
And steer straight through the rough-and-tumble!

No catastrophe made us yet squirm.
It takes stronger storm-brew to stay us.
We were born for stanzas, slim-built and firm,
To impreson the fury of Chaos.
Trans. by Ants Oras
(*Six Estonian Poets* 2002: 105)

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On the Way towards Modernity: an Estonian Poet's Relationship with the City [1]

KATRE TALVISTE

The lyrical poet and modern times

In 1912, a young Estonian critic decided he was living and, more importantly, reading in an entirely new age, and set about defining the ways this new age had for influencing poetry. The critic's name was Johannes Semper (1892–1970) and he published his thoughts in an essay titled *Lüürik ja meie aeg* (*The Lyrical Poet and Our Times*, Semper 1912). One of Semper's principal convictions, repeatedly expressed in this essay, is that urban environment and lifestyle constitute an essential factor that shapes modern poetry. The process of shaping is dual in its nature: Semper aims to distinguish between the time-dependent and timeless components of lyricism (Semper 1912: 148) and reaches a paradoxical conclusion through the example of Émile Verhaeren. Obviously thinking about Verhaeren's book *Les Villes tentaculaires* (1895), he concludes that Verhaeren has a more profound understanding of the modern times than any other lyrical poet, but that the real power of his lyricism resides in the distance he is able to put between himself and the modern urban environment. The latter is the source of his poetical figures, but these figures take on a different meaning: Verhaeren transforms the city

[1] The article is based on the presentation held at the conference *Urbes Europaeae. Villes européennes. Imaginaire littéraire et représentations culturelles* in Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, 4–14 December 2006.

into a symbol and thus ends its prosaic and businesslike existence (Semper 1912: 158–160).

Years later, in the preface to a collection of his translations of Verhaeren, Semper is much more fascinated by Verhaeren's realistic qualities, suggesting that the symbolic value of a figure does not necessarily remove the figure from the reality from which it is extracted, but brings out the symbolism of the reality itself: he believes that in the aforementioned book, the city in its material and social aspects has become, for Verhaeren, the very sign of human energy and potential (Semper 1929: 17).

Semper's reading of Verhaeren thus grows and changes with time, and doubtlessly with his own experiences of the city. In 1912, he could speak mostly from his solitary reading experiences[2], in 1929 he was more or less a seasoned city-dweller, himself an author of urban poetry, and his Estonian public had become somewhat more familiar with the idea of city being an acceptable poetic subject. The following is an attempt to follow some lyrical and intellectual pursuits of an author thus involved in the process of learning to "read" the modernity and finding a way of giving a poetical form to the experience.

Some aspects of Johannes Semper's life and work

Johannes Semper was born in an essentially urban era in Europe, but still in a most rural environment in Estonia. Son of a country schoolmaster, he grew up in a small village, like the rest of his generation of Estonian authors. His schooling took place in small towns on the Estonian scale, practically villages on the European scale.

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[2] Semper had begun his studies in the university of St Petersburg in 1910. It was his first time to live in a real city. It was also in St Petersburg that he started really serious work in literature and wrote his first texts that were published, but not in St Petersburg where he lived, his public remained in Estonia (Siirak 1969: 32–48).

One of Semper's most vivid memories from school time is the day he read an album published by the *Young Estonia* movement (Semper 1978: 162–164). That movement was led by writers about 10 years his seniors and its aim was to bring the Estonian literature on level with the Western literature. Between 1905 and 1915, the *Young Estonia* published many articles about European literatures, translated a great number of texts from various literatures and contributed in other significant ways to the emancipation and modernization of Estonian literature. At the age of nineteen, while living and studying in St Petersburg, Semper already published in their magazines (Semper 1911, Semper 1912).

His early essays show him to be a very powerful reader. For his article on symbolism he claims to have read every last bit of related material (literary text and criticism) that he could find in St Petersburg libraries (Semper 1978: 178). The same urge for exhaustive background reading is obvious from his later articles, some of which analyze rather massive works as those of Proust and Montaigne.

Also, it is obvious that Semper is almost obsessed with the subject of time, in every sense. He's interested in the perception of time, in the rhythm of life and in the way the modern environment, especially the city changes that perception. He's also interested in the effect this has on the poetics: the rhythm of the text, the form of the phrase or verse, the development of figures. And he's also very aware of the fact that we all are living in a certain moment of time and that this implies a responsibility. As a being dependent on time, man must learn to choose, to make decisions, to act, to shape his time. The first to translate Sartre into Estonian (in 1938), Semper also shows these convictions in other than poetic practices. In the 1930s, he had a rather prominent role in the Estonian literary life. Later, his attitude of a man of action cost him dearly: always a socialist, he first welcomed the Soviet occupation and became the Minister of education in the first Soviet government, later to be disillusioned about his ideals, horrified at the course of events, repressed by the Stalinist regime, and finally, after the fall of the Soviet occupation, he has been quite severely criticized about his choices.

However, Semper was a misfit long before socialist views lost their respectability among Estonian intellectuals. At the beginning of the 20th century, most of those were socialists, and Semper among them. Back then it was his poetics that was difficult to accept. His first book of poems, published in 1917, was found to be too intellectual and of a too literary inspiration, not from the "life itself" (Semper 1978: 275). Both accusations followed Semper throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

Another aspect of his poetry that has found little congeniality among his contemporaries is his sensibility to urban landscapes and atmospheres. Here criticism was not so fast to arise, but he had next to no analogues or followers. In his youth, Semper studied in several European cities (St Petersburg, Moscow, Berlin, Rome, Paris) and that experience influenced him deeply. Since his earliest writings he tries to understand the modernity: the urban lifestyle, the rhythm of the cities, new patterns of perception and their influence on poetics. His poems also do not just use urban landscapes as props or background, they deal with fundamentally modern and urban experiences, which was rather rare in the Estonian poetry at that time (and even a lot later), even though there were, of course, other poets whose biography includes such experiences.

The Five Senses and The Cities

In 1926, Semper published a book of poems with the title *Viis meelt* (*The Five Senses*). It consists of nine sections. The eighth of them is called "Suurlinnad" (The Cities), thus explicitly turning his reader's attention to the not-so-familiar subject. As the English language opposes *city* to *town*, Semper's title makes it also clear that it is not just any urban landscape he has in mind, but that he's really speaking of great metropolis, such as there has never been in Estonia. He, however, had closely known five of them. He calls these cities his "signposts" and he takes four different journeys along the road these signs point out.

In "Viis viita" (The Five Signposts, poem 1) he addresses mostly the physical, material reality of the city (steel, stone, concrete, smog,

shops and stores, money etc.). In "Oo teie mu linnad" (O My Cities, poem 4) he turns to the social and cultural reality (jazz, somewhat fancy, but essentially vain and empty people on the streets, cabarets, public speakers, scholars, revolutions etc.). These two poems draw a general portrait of cities.

In the two others, "Armastaks tundi..." (I Would Love the Hour..., poem 2) and "Autobiograafilist" (Something Autobiographical, poem 3), he looks at the individuality of each of his five cities. "Something Autobiographical" is a journey through time. The passage from one space to another is practically imperceptible, except that he points out, more or less discreetly, that the here-and-now of St Petersburg has been replaced by that of Moscow, then Berlin, then Rome and finally Paris. The emotional and intellectual surroundings also change: the young poet, reader of symbolists from St Petersburg is replaced by the student of architecture from Moscow, he in his turn by a bookish scholar from Berlin, who studies enthusiastically the psychoanalysis and then suddenly has doubts about his intellectual pursuits. In Rome and Paris we see already a maturing, self-confident subject who has learned to balance the knowledge acquired in his journeys with his own thought, with his five senses and joys of life.

In "Armastaks tundi..." he proceeds differently. Here we catch brief sensations, memories from all the five cities, never named but recognizable from the landmarks that have impressed the poet. This is a journey through space, through five different places that coincide and open simultaneously in one moment, in the hour that the poet would love, in his love for these places. This merging of the space brings us to the same conclusion Semper himself draws repeatedly: he has been in those cities, but now the cities are in him. They are far away, but he cannot be separated from them.

There is also a fifth poem in this cycle, "Veduri enesetapp" (The Suicide of a Railway Engine), but I will turn to this poem later. The number of poems coincides, perhaps not very significantly, but still charmingly with the numeral in the title of the book itself. In "Suurlinnad", Semper actually seems somewhat obsessed with the number five, and in the third poem ("Autobiograafilist") he directly refers to the figure of the five senses (Semper 1926: 105) that first

appears in the title of the entire book. This is not a very profound observation, but it still underlines the importance the city has in Semper's perception of the world: it is the very place of perception, having the same structure. However, the moment he calls for the opening of all the five senses, he's suddenly transported from Rome to the seaside, and finds there again the meaning of the soil, the water, the sky and the air. This is the constant structure of his relationship with the city: exaltation is followed by doubt or withdrawal, and vice versa.

The present position of the lyrical I is never clearly established in the four poems briefly described, but it is clear that his relationship with the city is not that of a subject with his present surroundings. The city is absent. The most explicit description of the present, and a rather vague one at that (at the end of the first poem), hints that the lyrical I is confined to a small town, removed from among the crowds of millions of people, and is not entirely happy with it. Instead, he continues to walk in the great cities, aided by the city maps he's holding in his hands (Semper 1926: 101). He's thus attached to an absent environment to which he almost desperately expresses his love.

The desperation of his love and need for the cities is underlined by the fact that he often perceives the city as something not entirely wholesome and reliable. There are the obvious remarks about the emptiness of the bourgeois life, about the dirtiness and ugliness of industry, about the dehumanizing effect of technology etc. In the first poem, Semper most clearly makes an attempt to escape from the city. He asks a "numbered" messenger boy to accompany him back to the country where they could run with puppies and sheep, free from all restraints and conventions imposed by the city (ib. 99–100). The messenger boy laughs at him and he himself finds his protests and attacks against the city quite vain (ib. 100).

He has trouble accepting all the facets of urban life, he doesn't want to be "numbered". He sometimes feels trapped in the city, resents the emptiness and lack of unchanging values. The rhythm of the city is consuming. And yet it is difficult to determine whether he really is a country man taking flirting excursions to an urban space, or a city man clinging to the remnants of the illusion that country

would be a happy place and free him from the dangers and fears of the city. Semper speaks of the city with passion, and yet this passion seems charged with some trouble or guilt. The easiest way would be to attribute the guilt either to the fact that the passion isn't quite real, that he's only acting the role of the urban poet, flirting with the modernist poetics. Or – to the fact that he actually feels his true world to be that of countryside and nature, but is still drawn to the city and feeling uncomfortable with this fascination.

The real problem, however, seems not to be the falseness of one of his feelings, but the simultaneous authenticity of both. Semper is not just playing with images (already the organic rhythm and the energetic flow of the phrase in these five poems are a sign of conviction and passion), he's honestly reflecting on an authentic experience. But the very experience is paradoxical and full of tensions. Coming from a culture and from a poetic tradition where nature, non-urban and pre-modern qualities and values were very much appreciated and the urban experiences unfamiliar, Semper reflects a lot on his own rather vast and intense experiences of that kind. He loves the city in general and the five cities where he spent his youth and his maturing years, in particular. He keenly feels the absence of that beloved environment which he has left behind in order to return home: it is from this point of view that the urban landscapes' cycle in *Viis meelt* is written.

The living monster

In a more detailed analysis of the five poems, a specific group of figures becomes visible: the images of food. The city can eat (for instance, department stores lurk on the street corners, as if looking for prey, their teeth all brushed white (ib. 99), but it can also feed those in it. The poet has also eaten the food offered by the city, for example, his brain has been fed the truth made of concrete (ib. 98). It is not entirely certain that this food is good, but eating it is inevitable and it transforms the eater. Semper's love for the city is a love for a terrifying but utterly fascinating creature – a creature that has turned

himself into such a creature as well: he wonders whether or not to take a poisoned arrow and kill the "city-bull" in himself (ib. 100).

Thus, a powerful synthesis is born: the urban environment depicted in a most realistic manner, with many startling details is, at the same time, a magical, wild organism or jungle, where the very elements of its modern reality turn gradually into living creatures. But even if the city is monstrous in many respects, it is a living monster, or a cluster of living monsters, as we see in the fifth and last poem of the cycle, "Veduri enesetapp".

In that poem, a railway engine goes mad, it jumps off the rails and runs amok in the streets. We see the sidewalks press themselves into the walls of houses in terror, the houses close their "eyes", people fade into the walls or get pressed into the pavement as so many collars, the cars scream out (ib. 110), the whole city is in panic. Then, at one point, the engine realizes its tragedy: loneliness. There is no other "animal" like itself to love and to make love to, everybody and everything hates the engine, so at last the it decides to commit suicide. The whole city then calms down and forgets at once about the incident, except for the carriages that mourn for three days (ib. 112).

Thus Semper projects all the qualities, all the feelings mostly associated with the non technological, human, natural, pre-urban landscape to the elements of this new landscape. The city has transformed him, so he transforms the city. Since his passion for the city is mixed with some fear, his city also acquires that torn quality: the elements of the urban landscape take on a human face, they also experience a longing for timeless, pre-modern values such as love, friendship or freedom. Therefore, they also experience despair and fear when faced with their own modern existence, but it is obvious that the only way out of that existence is self-destruction. There is no innocent and effortless escape to the nature that Semper had half-heartedly suggested in the first poem. It is impossible to be something or somebody else, the choice is between suicide (the way of the mad railway engine) or acceptance and admission of the modern identity. In search of this acceptance, Semper makes the city his accomplice and also an object of compassion and empathy. Even

a monster can be a beloved partner for the poet, whereas an entirely lifeless object or environment could not.

Translating modernity

This brings us back to Semper's readings of Verhaeren, in a continuously paradoxical manner. In his earliest remarks about Verhaeren's urban poetry, Semper had mentioned the personification of the city, saying that Verhaeren calls the city a monster (Semper 1912: 159), only to reject in the very same sentence the significance of such a figure: "It is not important [...] This personification by Verhaeren is a consequence, not an objective" (*idem*). However, when he's later translating a choice of Verhaeren's poems, half of the texts he chooses from *Les Villes tentaculaires* (Verhaeren 1929: 110–120) represent this aspect of Verhaeren's city: *La plaine* and *Vers le futur*, the first and the last poem of the book. The other two poems from that book – *La révolte* and *Une statue (apôtre)* – concentrate on the social aspect Semper found important at the time of composing his selection of Verhaeren's poems.

In a way, Semper was right at first, when he said that the personified city has no particular importance in Verhaeren's poetry: it is much less prominent than in his own poems, written and published between these two excursions to Verhaeren's work I have been referring to. That is, Verhaeren's personification is different: *Les Villes tentaculaires* contains a lot of metonymic figures that identify the city with the people in it: people in movement, people's hearts beating etc. The actual persons in the city lend their life to their environment. In Semper's case it is the other way round: the lifeless objects acquire human qualities. Verhaeren does that, too, but quite marginally. Here Semper's selection rather adds to the importance of this technique and this type of perception in Verhaeren's poetry.

Semper's journeys to the faraway cities and to the works of the faraway authors show that learning to "read" something new – a new environment, a new experience, a new poetics – requires translation. Verhaeren, one of his favourite poets, first serves him as an

interpreter of the modern urban culture. Later on, translating Verhaeren shows him new ways of understanding the poetic transformations of that culture. The poetic experience has obviously helped him to translate his own real life experience of the European metropolis'. Semper's first modernity, the one he described in 1912, was largely borrowed, an intellectual construct based upon his first inklings of the urban reality and the modern poetics. In the following years he did a lot in order to make this modernity his own and also to share it with his fellow-countrymen. But in so doing, he himself moved on, became different. And, of course, every such personal transformation contributed to that new and modernized Estonian literature Semper and his colleagues had set out to create. Although, as in the case of each individual discovery of modernity, the way from the goals set around 1910 to the achievements reached around 1930 was marked by several moments of redefinition and revaluation.

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City as the Site of Externalized Subjectivity

JAAK TOMBERG

The character of the relationship between the individual and her environment has always proved to be a meaningful basis for analyzing literary texts. For the last 300 years, since the Enlightenment, this has meant an ever greater attention to the relationship between the individual and its surrounding urban environment. It may well be that there are so many comprehensive literary analyses of the city because we can draw many meaningful parallels between our experience of the city and our experience of the text. A traveler traverses the city in very much the same way as a reader who reads the text – in order to grasp or make sense of her environment she must be constantly mobile and attentively map her surroundings. The experience one gets from a city and the experience one gets from a text can in many respects be considered empiric equivalents – for example, their existence contains both loss and promise, and the multiplicity inherent to them requires constant interpretation and re-interpretation.

In this way, Richard Lehan's extensive survey *The City in Literature* (Lehan 1998) takes us on a three-hundred-year long literary walk in the empiric history of the city. It starts from Enlightenment's strict belief in the individual and its property, in reason and technology which transforms nature into mere material usable in the industrial process; then takes us further through the cities of Blake, Dostoevsky, Doyle, Eliot, Mann, Joyce and Orwell which all – in their own specific and characteristic way – see the individual as someone somehow opposed to or estranged from her urban environment, and finally ending up in the postmodernist city of Thomas Pynchon, where the subject has totally dispersed, because the city can no longer be governed by any convenient structuralizing principle.

In many respects, Lehan's walk is a classic one constituted by many common and widespread notions about different literary eras – from the enlightenment where the individual is an organic part of the city, through romanticism and naturalism where the individual is already clearly separated from her urban environs, onwards towards modernism where, for example, decadence and aestheticism can be considered as the final attempt to somehow "root" or "ground" the individual to the city, and finally to postmodernism which designates the dispersion of the subject to the city's confusing and oppressive multitude. The movement here has a clear direction – from the city which was supposed to be the supreme manifestation of human reason and abilities to the city which undermines the importance of these same powers; from the city which sanctifies the individual to the city in the name of which the individual has to be sacrificed.

The textual dimension of the literary work also seems to reflect this walk: starting, for example, from naturalism's cold and desperate mimesis, reflecting the possible Marxist notion of the worker's estrangement from his own work; through Proust's modernist prose with its long, voluminous and complex sentences which can in this respect be interpreted as a desperate attempt to somehow fully reflect the coherence of an identity that is already on the verge of dispersal, the long sentence here somehow trying to sum up "everything at once" – and onwards to postmodern prose which, with its often unorganized narrative structure, schizophrenic textual organization and the lack of a coherent individualized speaking voice, signalizes the subject's powerless and unconditional surrender to her environment.

Walter Benjamin once characterized the individual's relationship to the city in his book about childhood memories, titled *Berlin Childhood around 1900*. The passage goes as follows:

> Not to find one's way around a city does not mean much. But to lose one's way in a city, as one loses one's way in a forest, requires some schooling. Street names must speak to the urban wonderer like the snapping of dry twigs, and little streets in the heart of the city must reflect the times of day, for him, as clearly as a mountain valley. (Benjamin 2006: 53)

I think that if this passage is interpreted literally, it is a good description of an experience gained from a walk in what we might call a modernist city – it is sometimes easy not to find one's way around there but, at the same time, it is hard to get completely lost. But if we take Benjamin's passage metaphorically, it may turn out to be a convenient characterization of the modernist subject: she is never completely herself (for example, because she is in some way estranged from her urban environment). But she thoroughly acknowledges this "not-being-oneself", and precisely because of this acknowledgement, she is never completely lost: it is this affirmation of being somewhat "out-of-herself" that really establishes her as a coherent subject. So, to put it back in Benjamin's terms, she may not often find her way in life (or find herself in life), but she will not totally lose her way either. In this respect, although her coherence is constantly threatened, the modernist subject is still firmly grounded: it is her contradiction with her environs and herself that is the source and the real site of her subjectivity.

The problem of subjectivity is much more complex if we approach the so-called "postmodern subject" and its relation to the postmodernist literary city. Benjamin's assertion about finding one's way in the city is no longer valid here – and not because the post-modern subject has already lost her way but rather, and by way of a minimal difference, because there is already nobody there to lose it.

A characteristic transition from modernist to postmodernist subjectivity can be found in a passage from the beginning of Thomas Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49*. Protagonist Oedipa Maas (surely a female Oedipus?) has just arrived home from a Tupperware party with the knowledge that she'd been appointed as an executor to the will of Pierce Inverarity, a very rich man (and a supposed metaphoric embodiment of America in this novel). This appointment will later draw Oedipa into many confusing and chaotic dead-end adventures concerning the possible discovery of a worldwide secret network of outcasts. But this is how Pynchon describes her inner condition after her arrival home:

> Oedipa stood in the living room, stared at by the greenish dead eye of the TV tube, spoke the name of God, tried to feel as drunk as possible. But this did not work. She

> thought of a hotel room in Mazatlan whose door had just been slammed, it seemed forever, waking up two hundred birds down in the lobby; a sunrise over the library slope at Cornell University that nobody out on it had seen because the slope faces west; a dry, disconsolate tune from the fourth movement of the Bartok Concerto for orchestra; a whitewashed bust of Jay Gould that Pierce kept over the bed on a shelf so narrow for it she'd always had the hovering fear it would someday topple on them. Was that how he'd died, she wondered, among dreams, crushed by the only ikon in the house? That only made her laugh, out loud and helpless: You're so sick, Oedipa, she told herself, or the room, which knew. (Pynchon 1999: 1)

What we have here, in this passage, is on one hand the subject's desperate try to grasp her self-consciousness in its entirety, in very much the same way as a complex modernist passage would – except that this try ends in fragmentary ruins and Oedipa thinks of four or five almost meaningless random things at once. And on the other hand we have her self-testimonial that she is sick or "out of herself", and the surrounding room which already knows her inner truth. I am tempted to interpret this latter part literally – it is as if Oedipa arrives at her "inner truth" for the first time only after the room has already recognized it. Or, to put it yet in another way, Oedipa's inner confession is no longer something that comes from somewhere "deep inside" her, but it is rather a symptom or a momentary reflection of the characteristics of the room that surrounds her. Pynchon's passage can therefore be read as the transition or collapse of a fragmentary consciousness onto the surface of the environment around her. And this is how I would like to metaphorically describe the concept of the postmodernist city: it is created when the coherence of the subject has been sacrificed for the sake of the city and the city has taken on an impersonal consciousness of its own, thus becoming "the subject-less room that knows".

In the survey that I have already mentioned, Richard Lehan uses similar terms to describe the nature of the post-modern city. In a similar vein to that of post-structuralist philosophy, he cites the loss of a transcendental signifier as the defining focus of the postmodernist literary city.

> If the city can be considered a system of signs we need a transcendental signifier (be it God, nature, history or the rational mind) to hold the other signs in place.

But without such a signifier

> the city becomes a system of dead signs, interpreted as best we can. Without a transcendental signifier, urban signs begin to float, and meaning gives way to mystery. Viewed from within a system as unstable as Derrida's system of language, the city loses claim to being "real". What we bring to the city is what we get back: the "echo" principle becomes the basis for our reality. The signs – failing to point towards a redeeming God (as they did for Robinson Crusoe), or a redeeming history (as they did for Hegel), or a redeeming nature (as they did for Wordsworth) or a redeeming art (as they did for Henry James) – become self-referential. [---] Lacking transcendence, the city cannot go beyond that what it consumes; the mind cannot go beyond itself. (Lehan 1998: 265–266)

This "not being able to go beyond itself" denotes the merging of the subject with her urban environment in the post-modernist novel. In coherence with the post-structuralist notion that language is not able to sufficiently refer to anything outside its borders, the city – as is also the case with Oedipa in Pynchon's novel – now only gives back that which one takes along with herself into it. Oedipa is left only with her own endless doubts and nothing certain or any outside to rely on. To quote Lehan again: "The city becomes a state of mind: it thinks us and not the other way round." (Lehan 1998: 267) Consciousness is no longer independent (as it was in the modernist system of the subject's estrangement); rather, it is perished to be a part of the city itself. (And, as a side-note, does this creation of the cityscape through the collapse of the consciousness not remind us of Žižek's interpretation of the classic Hegelian take on the opposition between transcendence and immanence: immanence only occurs when transcendence is sacrificed and it falls back to immanence; see Žižek 2004: 65)

So, instead of the modernist subject who was in opposition with the urban environment that estranged her in various ways (and it was often a creative opposition), there is in a postmodernist novel a "room that knows", a borderless space of impersonal, externalized subjectivity. Some tendencies in today's consumer society seem to point towards this space of impersonal subjectivity – as Dani Cavallaro says, in her survey titled "Cyberpunk and Cyberculture", advertising and media take the individual's personal desires, emotions and fantasies and translate them into images of ideal and desirable products. These images then tend to cancel out personal preferences of taste because they are marketed as universally appealing. (Cavallaro 2000: x) But this externalization is not only the externalization of personal desires and emotions. If we look at the prosthetic status of many everyday objects around us and our increasing reliance on them, we may also take notice of an increasing externalization of our physical (and psychic?) functions.

And through such a line of thought, for example, the lack on the level of the character in science fictional writing becomes somehow meaningful. The usual criticism towards science fiction – and one of the main reasons why it has often been labeled "bad art" or "lower literature" – is because of its lack of the psychological dimension of its characters. On the basis of my previous argument I would like to claim that a great amount of science fiction has in this respect been misread: one might say that science fiction with its great textual emphasis on descriptions and worldliness and its minimal emphasis on the literary character who, in the text, is often reduced to the status of a simple proper name, represents the point of view of the fictional world rather than any single subject. As a side-note, the artificial or alien environments that science fiction projects can often be taken as a general spatial metaphor for urban environment, because, as Roger Luckhurst mentions in his survey *Science Fiction*, science fiction has always been the literature of more or less technologically saturated societies. (Luckhurst 2005: 3)

Some well-known science-fiction authors (for example Charles Stross and Cory Doctorow) have fictionally materialized or "actualized" this collapse of the subject to the structure of the city in the form of the possibility of uploading the consciousness to a digital

network system – thus creating a city of bits which is exactly such kind of a "room that knows" outlined before. And hasn't cyberspace or virtual reality sometimes been visually presented as an endless city – for example in Neal Stephenson's cyberpunk novel *Snow Crash* (Stephenson 2000), in the Hollywood movie *The Hackers* or, most prominently in William Gibson's novel *Neuromancer*, where, among other things, it is described as "Lines of light ranged in the non-space of the mind, clusters and constellations of data. Like city lights, receding." (Gibson 1984: 51)

Thus, and in conclusion, it could be said that text and the city (and sometimes cyberspace) form a sort of a chain of equivalence following which the transition from modernist subject to post-modernist subjectivity can be traced.

Postmodern architecture – as Fredric Jameson seems to point out using the famous example of the Bonaventure Hotel (see imprints in Jameson 1996) – does not structuralize and organize space the way modern architecture does. Rather, it merely fills space and deprives our bodies of spatial coordinates. And largely the same can be said about the difference between the postmodernist novel and the modernist novel. In the modernist novel (again, consider Proust's prose) textual space is attentively organized and structuralized; the subject's antagonistic relation to her spatio-temporal environment and some organizing transcendental signifier are usually clearly evident.

In the postmodernist novel – the common and widespread example here being Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* (Pynchon 1973) – there is almost no flicker or reflection or reference of anything (any outside) whatsoever beyond the text: it is only the text itself that conjures the space it singularly inhabits. The text is not there to organize or structuralize something clearly exterior or "outside" but, paradoxically, only to fill the very same space the text itself takes up. (Also, and thereby, depriving the textual subject or the reader of its "spatial coordinates".) This fully self-referential space is also "subjective without a subject" – in very much the same way like the postmodernist city is "a state of mind which thinks us and not the other way round", the postmodern text is generated when

the subject (the coherent figure of the author or the narrator) is sacrificed and collapsed straight into the textual dimension itself.

The post-modern novel projects a world where, strictly speaking, we cannot talk about a postmodern subject – but we can talk about postmodern subjectivity, one of the real sites of which is the postmodernist city where impersonal and externalized desires float freely without any organizing principle and the subject, if anything can be called that, is a momentary and fragmentary product or flicker of the cityscape's continuous self-generation.

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Pragmapoetics as Literary Philosophy[1]

ARNE MERILAI

Pragmapoetics: A Theory of Two Contexts (Merilai 2001, 2003) is a study of figurative language usage as it informs literary texts.[2] It also tries to contribute to our understanding of ordinary language usage. The term suggests a fresh disciplinary branch which is guided by the assumption that poetic speech constitutes the object of analysis above all for a theory of poetics considering data provided by linguistic pragmatics. Pragmapoetics links Jakobsonian poetics with general semiotics: the study of syntax, semantics and pragmatics with an emphasis on the latter. It is primarily, although contingently, based on analytic language philosophy which offers sound advantages regarding methodological rigour and transparency extending as far as the possible affirmation of the Kantian postulate of grounding the research in logic, i.e. mathematics. While pragmapoetics explores the ontology of poetic utterances as a specific way of language usage, it forms, as a branch of language philosophy, the *a priori* philosophy of literature. Since it is concerned with the activity of the human mind in the contexts of fictionality, poetry, and the experience of beauty, it also belongs to

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[1] This article is based on the paper "Pragmapoetics: A Theory of Two Contexts" presented on September 8th, 2005 in Valencia, Spain at the 38th annual conference *Formal, Functional and Typological Perspectives on Discourse and Grammar* of the Societas Linguistica Europaea (Merilai 2005a).

Special thanks to my good friend professor Thomas Salumets from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver for his input.

[2] The notion of pragmapoetics, a theory of poetic language usage, was introduced by the author of this contribution as a parallel to the notion of pragmalinguistics, a study of language usage.

the philosophy of mind, and not only to aesthetics. Thus, it is my aim to contribute to our understanding of the way our mind works. More specifically, it is my contention that the properties of the poetic text reflect mental relations, or, as the creator of illocutionary logic, Daniel Vanderveken, put it "…. *the logic of language use reflects the* a priori *order of thought*" (1990: 226).

For the purpose of the poetics, pragmapoetics elaborates on theories of deixis (Karl Bühler, David Kaplan), speech acts (John L. Austin, John R. Searle, Daniel Vanderveken), implicatures (Paul Grice), discourse (Teun A. van Dijk), and fictionality (Gérard Genette, Gregory Currie). An analysis of the poetic language usage shows that the common theories should be refined to describe speech of the higher type.

It is assumed that an utterance can perform several speech acts at a time (q.v. Searle, Vanderveken 1985), with respect to both referential and self-referential aspects. It is explicable by the concept of additional speech force F which is expressed, for example, by the expressive assertive EA(p), where the conditions for achievement of an additional expressive act, like the propositional content p or sincerity condition, some preparatory conditions etc, are partly satisfied by the primary assertive act already. Thus, the poetic utterance *Hopes are going to turn to rags* (q.v. Appendix 1) by an Estonian poet Artur Alliksaar[3] can be formalised as an expressive assertive $E_{complaint}A_{description}(p)$, in which the assertive act can be understood as performed in full, while the expressive achieves a partial performance by using conditions partly fulfilled by the main act. Also, such concepts as macro-speech act, complex speech act and conversational implicature have to be considered.

However, pragmapoetics focuses itself on the self-referential, more specificly on the poetic function of the language usage. What is linguistic self-referentiality? It is something that reveals itself rather

[3] Artur Alliksaar (1923–1966) is a particularly appropriate choice since his extraordinarily imaginative free verse language poetry with its sonorous prosody, associative as well as paradoxical comical semantics, aphoristic, analytic and conversational properties provides an exceptionally representative and rich subject matter for both the study of poetics and language philosophy in general.

clearly, for example, in deictic activity (q.v. Figure 1, Merilai 2005b: 274).

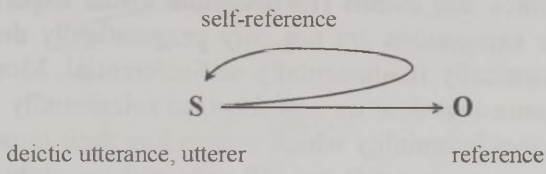

Figure 1. Deictic reference

The two main characteristics of the deixis are: 1) its explicit pragmatic context-dependency, and 2) its implicit semantic self-referentiality. As John Searle exspresses it in his *Intentionality* (1991: 221 ff):

In uttering indexical referring expressions, speakers refer by means of indicating relations in which the object referred to stands to the utterance of the expression itself.

So the expression 'I' refers to the person uttering that expression 'I'. 'You' refers to the addressee of the person uttering the expression 'you'. 'Here' refers to the place of the utterance of the expression 'here'. 'Now' refers to the time of the utterance of the expression 'now'. "Yesterday" refers to the day before the utterance day of the expression 'yesterday'. And so on (q.v. Figure 2, Merilai 2005b: 274).

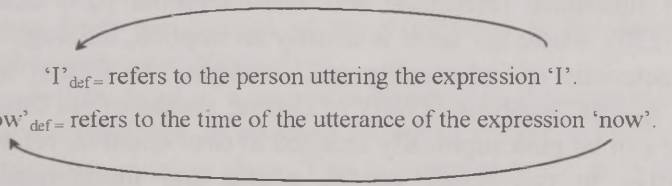

Figure 2. Deictic expressions

The utterance of indexical expressions, therefore, has a form of self-referentiality which is similar to the self-referentiality of certain intentional states and events (for example visual experience). In a word: deictic expressions are not only pragmatically demonstrative but also semantically fundamentally self-referential. More than that: one may assume that deictics can function referentially only due to their basic self-referentiality which is therefore their most interesting peculiar feature. As a result the left side and the right side of the definition of the meaning of the indexical expressions overlap yielding a reflexive circulus vitiosus.

Similar to deixis, the poetic expressions reveal strong self-referentiality, too, only they foreground their linguistic qualities (i.e. similarities) more clearly and background thus their referential contents (q.v. Figure 3, Merilai… 2003: 23, 2005b: 275).

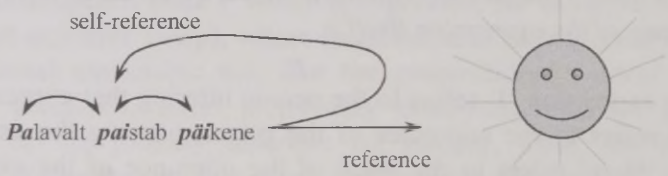

Figure 3. Poetic expression[4]

So it can be said by way of generalisation that language fulfils two main functions: referential and self-referential (q.v. Searle 1991: 218–230), where the latter is usually an implicit, although especially characteristic of indexicality and rhetorics, the former an explicit one. Roman Jakobson (1960), of course, speaks of six functions, but these can be philosophically reduced to two: emotive, referential and conative to referential, poetic, phatic and metalingual to self-referential, or poetic (q.v. Figure 4, Merilai… 2003: 22, 2005b: 275).

[4] Translation of the expression: *Scorchingly, the sun is shining.*

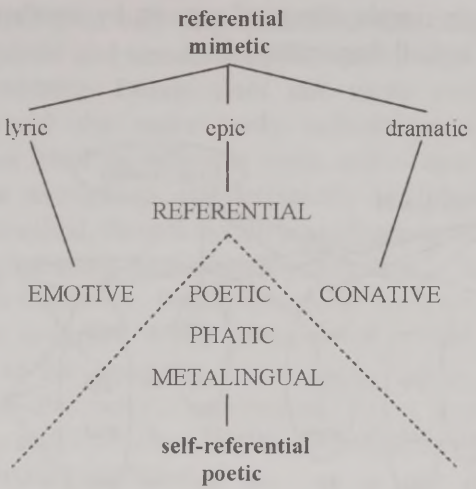

Figure 4. Referential and poetic functions

Considering poetics it seems to be clear that the expressive speech acts tend to satisfy mainly the emotive function (i.e. lyrics), while the assertives the referential one (epics), whereas the directives and the commissives lay stress more on the conative role (dramatics). However, the most essential property of the art of poetry is certainly the fact that it poses self-referential function as primary, while the mimetic activity or the referential function recedes to a more secondary position. Literature boosts linguistic self-referentiality that is relatively covert in ordinary speech, and turns the seemingly or actually referring utterances into an aim in itself, e.g. often shifting the attention from the content of the expression to the linguistic nature of the expressions themselves.

On the stylistic level of a poem (as opposed to the content level) the mutual referentiality of multiple phonetic, verbal, syntactic and semantic similarities takes place. This is essential to the parallelistic linguistic structures which the poems most genuinely are. It can be illustrated by the Figure 5 (Merilai… 2003: 36, 2005b: 280) where the rich mutual referentiality of linguistic equivalencies on different

levels in a single simple stanza of a poem by another Estonian poet Hando Runnel is well demonstrated[5].

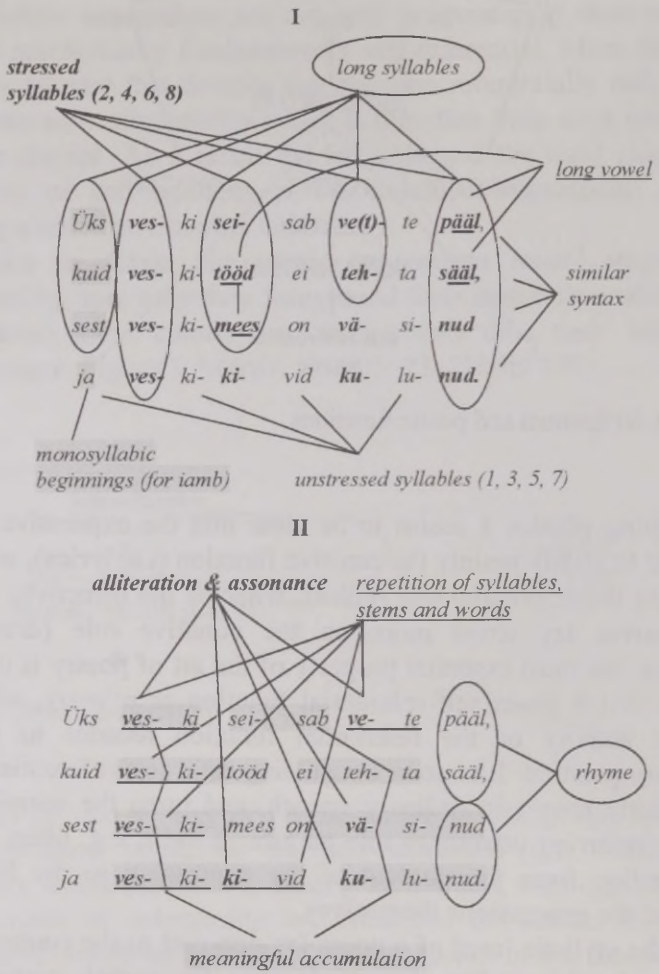

Figure 5. Poetic self-referantiality

[5] Translation of the stanza: *A mill stands upon the waters / but no millwork is being done there / as the millman is tired / and the millstones are dull.* (Hando Runnel, "A Mill Stands upon the Waters", 1972.)

It may be tempting to call this kind of poetic auto-referentiality among the linguistic and semantic equivalencies also deictical but it would be a mistake. Deixis does not work everywhere, pan-deictically, instead the more basic self-referential function of language reveals itself in different ways, either deictically or non-deictically. Not everything self-referential in language usage is automatically deictical, there is no such implication. On the contrary: one may claim that everything mutually reflexive in language is also poetical, at least implicitly. Both phenomena have fundamental self-referentiality in common which is therefore a more general and deeper feature of the language they reflect. This is why the self-manifestation of the poetic expressions looks pretty much like discourse deixis and vice versa: although stemming out of the same root, they are certainly different.

So, in addition to the previous analysis of the EA(p) poetic speech act with its additional force, the possible rhetorical speech forces of the Lotmanian secondary modelling system (e.g. Лотман 1972: 18–23) have to be taken into account. A central idea of *Pragmapoetics* consists of a model of the two contexts of literary perception: the aspect of the content, or the narrow context, and the aspect of the expression, or the broad context – single utterances but two levels of perception, of meaning and force (q.v. Figure 6, Merilai 2001: 166, 2003: 223, 2005b: 281).

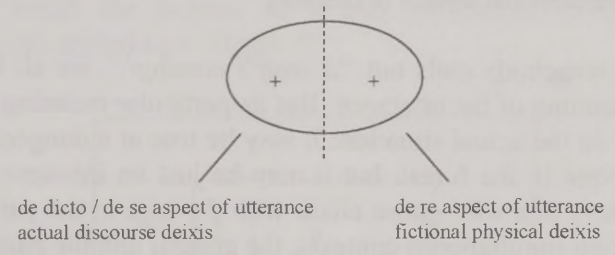

Figure 6. One utterance, different speech acts

According to *Pragmapoetics*, all linguistic communication takes place on two contextual levels simultaneously (probably a tacit

Fregean idea). In the narrow, or linguistic-semantic context, the type of the utterance is interpreted generally, against the background of possible worlds, while in the broad, or semantic-pragmatic context, the particular meaning gets fixed according to the actuality (q.v. Figure 7, Merilai 2001: 167, 2003: 223, 2005b: 282).

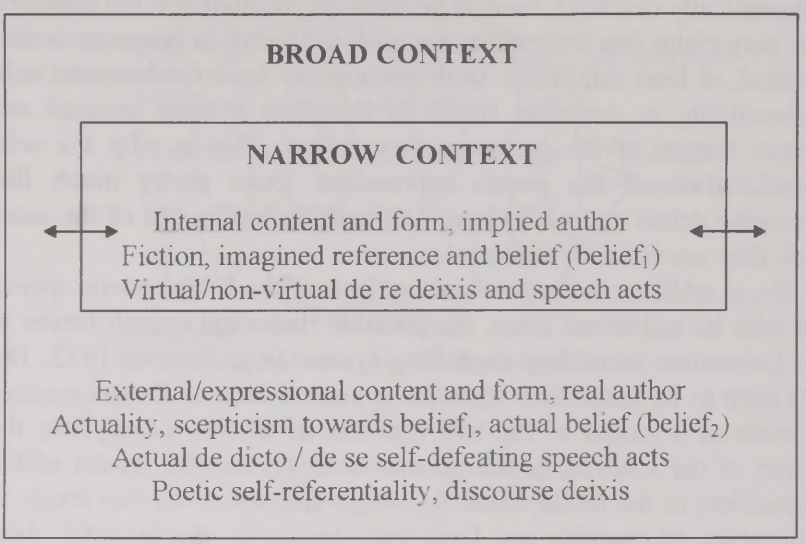

Figure 7. Perceptional aspects of literature

So, when somebody calls out *"A wolf's coming!"*, we all know the general meaning of the utterance. But its particular meaning becomes clear only in the actual situation: it may be true at a dangerous wolf-hunting event in the forest, but it may be just an innocent game of make-believe at a wild-goose chase with the kids in the park. Hence there are two simultaneous contexts, the general and the particular. In this instance, it is a matter of survival not to confuse the two: it is of utmost importance to know whether one's father is smiling or winking his eye (the rhetoric speech force markers) while saying "A wolf's coming!" or really trying to escape in panic.

Literary discourse clearly explicates the difference of the levels, by practising the imaginative referential function in the former (often

in a self-defeating, fictional or rhetorical manner); as well as amplifying the self-referential function of language in the latter, a real rhetoric context of the author and the reader. It is very important that the audience does not run onto the stage to save Othello and Desdemona from their dire straits or to chastise Harpagon, although some people whose personal pain is actually touched by the situation would like to stop the play. But it remains still a play and, as grownups, they recognise, what is an illusion and what is real. It is common intuition that the story is brought forward via a fictional author who is neither the intradiegetic narrator nor the actual author, or the producer using the actors to perform a text, but an extradiegetic construct between the narrow and the broad contexts implied by the audience – a well-informed, more or less imaginary mediator who is forwarding the event immediately unravelling in front of the spectator's eyes. This is just imagined. On the broad plane, however, the composition of the story, the absorbed acting and expression of the performers is observed. It constitutes an attempt to participate in a dialogue with Shakespeare, Molière, or the producer of the utterances. In case of the arts it is even "good" if the truth or success of an utterance in the narrow context does not pass the test of reality, which shows that something else has been striven for than the referential de re speech: the shift of attention from the content of the expression p – with its narrower de dicto environment – to its stylistic and artistic nature de se.

As a result the picture, as it may be outlined, forms itself eventually as tripled (q.v. Figure 8).

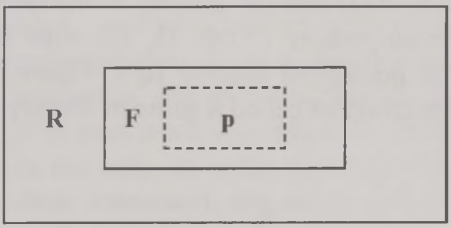

Figure 8. Imaginative speech act in rhetorical context

The secondary modelling system that has concentrated around the poetic function enters the horizontality of ordinary language usage on the vertical axis, whereas the secondary (or self-referential) becomes the main aim and therefore primary; the usually primary (or referential) can be made virtual and therefore it remains secondary – a spring-board, a stage prop, although not only that. The matter of the content, whether Anna comes to a happy end or ends up under a train, is an important inductive basis to this theory; however, the eyes of a deductivist literary scholar easily tend to glide over this level in favour of stylistics and can thus be mistaken for the detriment of the holistic whole.

Thus: in the narrow scope, the sincerity condition is reduced to imaginary belief, or make-belief; in the broad scope, to actual one, the relation of which to the former may often be sceptical. The spontaneously transgressible boundary between the two contexts, or aspects of the perception, with them also merging into each other, is signified by the symbol for the caesura //. So the complex utterance can be described with the help of formulae such as $R_{\text{metaphor(ical hyperbole), assonance}}$//EA(p) or $R_{\text{metaphor(ical hyperbole), assonance}}$//EA(p)...$R_{\text{irony}}$(q) where the possible ironic or sarcastic implicatum of the narrow context R_{irony}(q) (which is, of course, also an anticipated trope on the broader level) may perhaps once hint at a meaning like 'the Soviet life makes everything sordid' or something close to that. Attention shifts spontaneously between de re and de dicto / de se aspects of the poetic utterances, in which the imagined belief (or belief_1) is constantly alternating with the actual belief (or belief_2). The analogue would be Louis Necker's psychophysical cube from Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* (1996: 5.5423) and the drawing of the rabbit/duck from his *Philosophical Investigations* (2005: II, xi) with its *Aufleuchtung*, flashing up of its perceptual aspects (q.v. Figure 9). Such mental roundabout traffic could be called a game of literary or artistic make-believe.

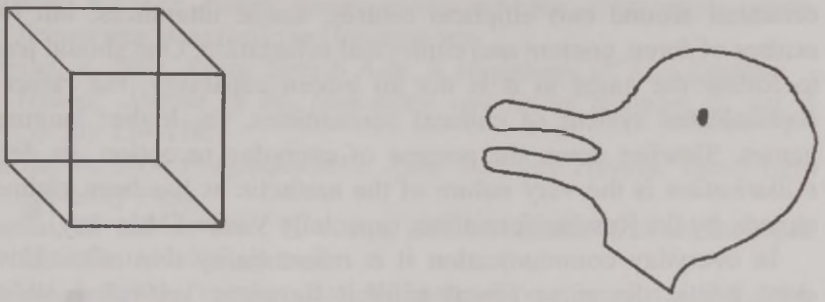

Figure 9. One expression, two objects

Thus, the theory is concerned with poetry and fiction operating simultaneously as a two-faced Janus around the borderline of two contexts: in the narrow one or in the world of make-believe inside a text (that at times can coincide with actuality but not necessarily), and, in addition, in the broad scope or the world of the actual belief of the author-text-reader. The speech force of the broader level is not applicable to the proposition as it is in the narrow context, but has the whole speech act of the narrow scope as its object: not simply p as de re but rather EA(p) as de dicto, or $R_{\text{metaphor(ical hyperbole), assonance}}$//EA(p)[...$A_{\text{irony}}$(q)] in its entirety as de se. Thus, the secondary (and clearly partial) speech act of the broad context can rather be described according to the principles of de dicto and de se – about itself, about its expressional qualities – than de re speech. The sense of the first level, *Sinn*, through which the reference, *Bedeutung*, is achieved, becomes itself the content on the second level and the reflexively indicated – obviously a Fregean idea (q.v. Frege 1892). Precisely the meaning of expressions is the content of art and its real object, the real indication; references to the actual world as an aim become virtual, or at least made secondary. So the actual content of a poem is not, or is not only, its particular content (as a string of the propositions or their summary), but rather the way this content is linguistically presented, its form and style. Expression itself becomes a content.

To sum up: the hypothesis of the two contexts seems to have a good explanatory power. According to it, poetic activity is con-

centrated around two elliptical centres: single utterances, but two centres of force, content and contextual orientation. One should learn to follow the game as it is not an inborn capability, but rather a sophisticated system of cultural conventions, i.e. higher language games. Slowing down the process of everyday reception, its defamiliarisation is the very nature of the aesthetic as has been claimed already by the Russian formalists, especially Victor Shklovksy.

In everyday communication it is referentiality that rules. However, poetic discourse reveal explicit linguistic self-referentiality. Poetic expression is more complicated than ordinary speech, a language usage governed by numerous artificial restrictions that is sometimes referred to as a secondary modelling system above the primary one. These hundreds of restrictions, i.e rules and devices of the artistic style (as well as the rules of breaking old rules), created throughout the centuries, are all more or less explicitly self-referential by nature: art boosts expressional self-referentiality. At least in literature, "The most important is the game," as one of the titles by Artur Alliksaar declares.

The deep sources of explaining language, mind and art lie in poetry, literature and the analysis of these. Linguistics and language philosophy without poetics do not make always sense, just like poetics does not make sense without them – it is not only Roman Jakobson or Juri Lotman (or even Martin Heidegger with his *Stiftung* by the poetic declarations) who present this opinion. However splendid it would be to clear up all the beautiful ways of auto-referentiality – alas, there is no proper mathematics yet.

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Appendix 1

ARTUR ALLIKSAAR (1923 – 1966)

WHERE TO,
WHERE TO,
UGH!!!

Time-tables.
Hail-tables.
Gain-tables.
Are the trains still going to hurry to the parties of strikingly struggling joys?!
Breath-nets.
Heat-nets.
Death-nets.
Are the shins still going to spray the blue sparks of spring?!
Hopes are going to turn to rags.
It doesn't matter – we'll sew them up with the thread of dreams stolen from the bushels of midnight.
The charm is going to grow thinner.
It doesn't matter – it can't vanish anywhere from the tight tin cup of our tribulations.
Yet the spell is really going to fade!
With more tension and greater gulps let us drink then its dusky brightness!
The soul is worn to holes like a prehistoric engine.
Never mind – we will race forward in a canoe carved out of the trunk of the future-tree.
You, wind, are a very frolicsome insect indeed!
For ever with us, chasers of captivations, for ever with us, trackers of transfigurations.
Never falling behind.
Look, how many pretend to be dumb!
Look, how respectably they make fools of themselves!
Look, how benightedness is boasted about!
Look, how many take muck for marmalade!
You can understand everything because you can jumble up things, in order to put them in proper order.
A fly is walking on the time-table and believes it is in Bergen and Berlin and Baku.
There is no moment when no one feels killed.
There is no moment when no one reaches out for an embrace.
There is no moment when no one is on the road.
Go ahead, go ahead, go ahead wrapped in the clouds of the dandelion-fluffs of your wish-dreams!
The branching out of fingers and toes, of thoughts and memories has neither beginning nor end.

Translated by A. Merilai and Ene-Reet Soovik

CUM DIIS NON CONTENDENDUUM. Estudio comparado del mito de Marsias en la literatura emblemática europea.

MARÍA PAZ LÓPEZ-PELÁEZ CASELLAS

La utilización de la alegoría como recurso para lograr ese enseñar deleitando al que apelaba la literatura emblemática, el "ut doceat, moveat, delectet" al que se refiriera Diego Saavedra Fajardo (1999: 230), fue muy bien recibida entre los intelectuales del Renacimiento, ya que permitía utilizar los poemas mitológicos y actualizarlos para sacar de ellos todos los beneficios posibles[1]. Se plasmaba así de forma certera la unión de lo útil y lo dulce, el *utile dulci* al que Horacio se refiriera en el *Arte Poética*[2]. El código iconográfico y literario en el que consiste la emblemática la hacía un medio especialmente adecuado para la transmisión de conceptos, siendo la parte literaria la que decidía la interpretación que debía ser realizada por el lector y reducía la polisemia propia de la imagen. Conocidas historias y mitos fueron recogidos en los tratados de emblemas y se erigieron como reflejo de las distintas circunstancias sociales, siendo utilizados como ejemplos que debían ser seguidos o evitados, imitados o rechazados.

Este último acercamiento al mito, el que lo considera un ejemplo que no debe ser imitado, es el que con mayor frecuencia se realiza

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[1] Para un análisis del papel desempeñado por la alegoría en la Academia de Ficino resulta muy interesante el estudio de André Chastel *Marsilio Ficino et l'Art* (1996: 149–177).

[2] Para conocer la presencia de esta máxima en el arte renacentista, ver el estudio de Rensselaer Lee *Ut pictura poesis. La teoría humanística de la pintura* (1982: 59–62).

del relato que abordaremos en estas páginas, el que narra el enfrentamiento entre el dios Apolo y el sátiro Marsias[3]. La contienda entre ambos músicos y el castigo al que se verá sometido Marsias actuarán a modo de lo que Santiago Sebastián ha denominado "contra-ejemplo", es decir, como un ejemplo de lo que no se debe hacer (1995: 78). Sin embargo, la actitud que tradicionalmente es censurada en este enfrentamiento, no ya sólo en la emblemática renacentista y barroca sino desde la Antigüedad, será la del desollado Marsias, la víctima del castigo, y no la de Apolo, el torturador.

El combate que se desarrolló entre estos dos músicos se revela tremendamente complejo y posibilitó, ya desde la Antigüedad clásica y a pesar de no haber sufrido apenas variaciones en su desarrollo, múltiples lecturas. Sin olvidar algunas de estas interpretaciones, fundamentales para conocer la importancia y el alcance que tuvo el combate entre los dos músicos, nos centraremos en el desarrollo de la historia y en la aproximación al enfrentamiento que, de forma recurrente, se adoptará desde la emblemática renacentista y barroca que se elaboró en el continente europeo. Para ello analizaremos la presencia del relato en obras realizadas por tres autores pertenecientes a entornos diferentes: el alemán Nicolas Reusner, el francés Jean Mercerius y el español Sebastián de Covarrubias Horozco. En todas ellas estará presente, de manera más o menos directa, un mismo momento, aquél que recogiera Filóstrato *el Joven* en *Imágenes* cuando, utilizando el recurso de la *écfrasis* retórica, afirmaba:

> El Frigio ha sido vencido; en efecto, su mirada es ya la de un hombre muerto, pues sabe lo que le espera y se da cuenta de que ha tocado la flauta por última vez, a causa de su inoportuna actitud jactanciosa para con el hijo de Leto. Su flauta yace en tierra, condenada al silencio, pues se acaba de demostrar que desentona, y él está de pie junto al pino del que sabe va a ser colgado; él mismo se había fijado el castigo: ser despellejado para hacer un odre (Filóstrato 1996: p. 163).

[3] Incluso en los emblemas en los que se realiza una interpretación diferente de la que desarrollaremos en las siguientes páginas se menciona con frecuencia la soberbia del sátiro.

Nicolaus Reusner (1545–1602), el primer tratadista al que nos vamos a referir, representa la leyenda del enfrentamiento entre Apolo y Marsias en uno de los emblemas que se encuentran en *Emblemata Nicolai Reusneri IC. Partim ethica, et physica: partim vero historica, & hieroglyphica*. Catedrático en las universidades de Jena y Estrasburgo, además de jurista, filósofo y poeta, este autor desempeñó incluso algún cargo distinguido en la corte del emperador Rodolfo II. El tratado, publicado por primera vez en Frankfurt en 1581, está dividido, como se indica en el título, en cuatro libros que atienden a una distinta temática. El tercero, el dedicado a las fábulas de la Antigüedad, recoge las historias e ilustraciones que aparecían en las *Metamorfosis* de Ovidio y, por tanto el relato protagonizado por Marsias y Apolo (1581: 138–139).

El complejo emblema que presenta Reusner está formado por los tres elementos del considerado emblema canónico, a saber: un grabado, en el que se plasma el momento de la tragedia, y un mote y un epigrama escritos en latín. La *pictura* del emblema, de excelente calidad, reproduce el momento en el que Marsias, atado de pies y manos a un árbol, se retuerce de dolor ante la cruel tortura a la que le está sometiendo Apolo. Llama la atención el fuerte contraste que el grabador establece en la imagen entre ambos personajes y que, en parte, está provocado por el aspecto físico de los contendientes. Mientras Marsias, semidesnudo, muestra un cuerpo provisto de cuernos y patas de macho cabrío, acorde a su condición de sátiro, Apolo parece ir vestido siguiendo los cánones estéticos del Renacimiento y se presenta con el aspecto de un joven trovador. A esto hay que unir las grandes diferencias que se advierten en las actitudes de ambos; a la serenidad y tranquilidad del dios se contrapone la angustia y el movimiento violento de Marsias[4]. Mediante estos contrastes se podría hacer referencia a la condición moral de los dos músicos, sofisticada y virtuosa en uno, y brutal y animal en el otro[5].

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[4] Estas dos actitudes, fundamentales para conocer la interpretación realizada de cada uno de los contendientes en la Antigüedad, quedan perfectamente resumidas en un comentario que Plutarco realiza en *Sobre la E de Delfos* (1987: 389A-B)

[5] El Marsias desnudo que se observa en las representaciones de este tipo haría referencia a la denominada "*nuditas criminalis*" a la que se refiriera Petrus

Incluso Apolo guarda su elegante compostura mientras arranca sin piedad la piel del cuerpo del sátiro. El momento plasma el terrible episodio que recogiera Ovidio en las *Metamorfosis*:

> Mientras gritaba le arrancaron la piel a lo largo de la superficie del cuerpo, y no había nada que no fuera una herida: de todas partes mana la sangre, los músculos quedan visibles y al descubierto, y las venas palpitantes vibran sin cubierta alguna; se podían contar las vísceras que se estremecían y las entrañas que se le transparentaban en el pecho (Ovidio 2001: VI, vv. 382-ss).

El lema, "Tecum habita" [Vive contigo o Aprende a vivir con tu suerte], enlaza de forma perfecta con el epigrama. Compuesto de doce versos latinos, el poema está dotado de una estructura simétrica; mientras que en los seis primeros versos se ofrecen ejemplos concretos en los que los resultados de mantener una determinada actitud fueron funestos, en los seis últimos Reusner aborda el mensaje que quiere transmitir de forma directa[6]. Partiendo de ejemplos tales como el del burro que se cubrió con una piel de león y acabó siendo apaleado hasta la muerte, el de Marsias despellejado por Apolo o el de un soldado llamado Thraso, o Trasón, que, según se indica, se transformó o se metió en la piel de un elefante, Nicolás Reusner afirma, en la segunda parte del texto, que debemos contentarnos con nuestra suerte y conocer bien cuáles son nuestras limitaciones. La naturaleza asigna a cada uno un sitio que debe ser

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Berchorius (cif. Panofsky 1989: 213–214); serviría para enfatizar un vicio, en este caso, el de la vanidad y el orgullo.

[6] Circuit horrentis dum pelle leonis asellus
Turpiter exutus, fusteque caesus abit.
Marsya, dum propria non vis in pelle quiesse:
Phoebeis digitis excoriatus obis.
Sic elephantina quoniam Thraso pelle superbit:
Stultitiae arguitur proditor ipse suae.
Si sapis, esse tua contentus sorte memento:
Intra fortunam disce manere tuam.
Quem natura locum tribuit, satis esse putato:
Si, quod habes, quod non habeas quoque munere Diuum?
Et quo plura negas tu tibi, plura feres.

valorado y en el que debemos mantenernos. Las consecuencias de no seguir estas indicaciones son, aunque Reusner no lo señala, seguras, ya que la estupidez, como afirma al referirse al soldado Trasón, acaba descubriéndose. El último verso parece ser el más enigmático de todo el epigrama; en él, Reusner nos dice que cuanto más renunciemos, más recibiremos, "Et quo plura negas tu tibi, plura feres".

El soldado Trasón procede de una comedia de Terencio, *El Eunuco*, en la que se revela como una persona necia, engreída y vanidosa[7]. Por lo que respecta al ejemplo del burro que se cubrió con una piel de león creemos que debió ser bastante conocido, o al menos eso nos indica las fuentes en las que se recoge. Tanto en las *Fábulas* de Esopo (1978: 188) como en las de Fedro (1969: I 11) o en el posterior *Elogio de la locura* de Erasmo, este ejemplo es utilizado como una clara manifestación de la estulticia. Tras mencionar a los que pretenden hacerse pasar por sabios, Erasmo señalaba en esta última obra que "se pasean como monas revestidas de púrpura o asnos con piel de león" y declara de forma tajante que "(p)or esmerado que sea su disfraz, les asoman por algún sitio las empinadas orejazas de Midas" (1999: V). Mediante la comparación que establece en el poema, Reusner se refiere al hombre arrogante y necio que se sobrevalora en sus aptitudes, símil de la actitud del sátiro Marsias con respecto a sus dotes musicales.

El empleo de ejemplos, en concreto de apólogos, que se realiza en el epigrama está relacionado con el valor ejemplar que todavía se le concedían a éstos en el Barroco y proviene de la literatura didáctica medieval, en concreto de las colecciones de *exempla* que estaban tan de moda en los siglos XVI y XVII. En estas centurias todavía se seguían reeditando los repertorios de *loci communes* debido al valor que se le concedía a los ejemplos concretos que, ordenados alfabéticamente, ofrecían principalmente consejos morales (Maravall 1984: 205–7).

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[7] En esta comedia se emplean unas palabras similares a las del mote; dirigidas a Trasón, ponen de manifiesto el carácter vanidoso y la necedad del militar. Nos referimos a "Immo nollorum arbitror, si tecum uiuit" ["Más bien creo que de ninguno, si vive contigo"] (1987: III I, 409).

El mote que utiliza Reusner, "Tecum habita", fue una máxima que cobró una gran importancia en el Renacimiento y Barroco, y de forma más concreta en la emblemática. Originada en la Antigüedad, estaba vinculada al dios Apolo y al concepto de templanza; era una llamada a la necesidad de moderación. Como indica Winternitz, es con este sentido como aparece en el diálogo de Platón *Charmides o la Temperancia* (1979: 152). Esta máxima, especialmente vinculada a Sócrates, fue considerablemente modificada en su significado al ser utilizada en la literatura moral de la Edad Media. Autores como san Agustín o santa Teresa de Jesús la emplearon para indicar que el hombre que se conocía a sí mismo descubría a Dios en su interior, en el fondo de su alma. Esta introducción de la ideología religiosa cristiana hizo que se pudiera hablar, como indica Gilson, de un "*socratismo cristiano*", al convertirse en tan sólo un "planteamiento aparentemente socrático" (cif. Maravall 1983: 272–4)[8]. A diferencia de esta lectura, creemos que el mensaje que se transmite mediante el "conócete a ti mismo" en el emblema de Reusner está vinculado a la necesidad de introspección personal, al conocimiento y la aceptación del lugar que cada uno mantiene en la sociedad.

Sin querer entrar en el empleo que de esta máxima se ha realizado en la emblemática, queremos señalar la importante presencia que tuvo en los tratados del género. Con un mismo objetivo que Reusner la encontramos utilizada por el emblemista Zacharias Heyns, quien la reproduce en uno de los emblemas que coloca en el frontispicio de su *Emblemata. Emblemes Chrestienes et Morales* (1625); por Geffrey Whitney, que la recoge en su tratado *A Choice of emblemes, and other devises* (1586: p. 90); por Guillaume de La Perrière, en *Le théâtre des bons engins, auquel sont contenus cent emblèmes* (1539: p. 83); por Hernando de Soto, en sus *Emblemas Moralizadas* (1983: fol. 77–8); o por Juan de Horozco, en *Emblemata Moralia*. Este último autor resume de forma clara el significado que se debe encontrar a las palabras del mote de Reusner:

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[8] Para una aproximación a estas cuestiones, ver el capítulo de Maravall "La estimación de Sócrates y de los sabios en la Edad Media española", incluido en *Estudios de Historia del Pensamiento español* (1983: 269–330).

El que vive consigo acomodado
Con lo poco que tiene y en su casa
Qual caracol humilde y ençerrado,
No cuente su fortuna por escasa (1601: IIII XVI).

Nos ha quedado un detalle por mencionar, el de las palabras escritas tras el mote del emblema. Tras el socrático "Tecum habita", Reusner añade "In Attalum", es decir, "In Attalus". Aunque no hemos podido averiguar quién fue Attalus, este personaje debió tener una especial relación con Reusner y una personalidad muy marcada, habida cuenta que no es la única ocasión en la que se dirige a él y tampoco la única en la que lo hace en unos términos similares. En uno de los epigramas que incluye en su *Operis* (1593: IIII), Reusner le advierte:

Qui damnas experta, et inexperta Attale laudas:
Contentus nec vis vivere sorte tua.
Invictus ipse malum tibi sic cruedeliter optas:
Te magis ut pigeat poeniteatque tui.

[Tú, Atalo, que condenas las cosas comprobadas y alabas lo que no lo está y no quieres vivir contento con tu propia suerte, tú mismo, envidioso, deseas para ti el mal de tal manera que te arrepientas y te lamentes].

Recapitulando lo expuesto hasta el momento con respecto al epigrama, podemos señalar que, mediante un mensaje abiertamente conformista, acorde a la moral estoica y a los principios de la Contrarreforma y que se manifiesta de forma especial en la parte final del epigrama, Reusner realiza una advertencia hacia ese intento de cambio que encarnan los tres protagonistas. En los personajes que presenta Reusner existe una diferencia entre lo que son, su parte interior, y lo que quieren ser, la piel con la que están recubiertos o la imagen que ofrecen de sí mismos; es decir, cada uno de ellos pretende ser lo que no es. Ante esta actitud, Reusner aconseja que se realice una introspección destinada a conocer y aceptar el lugar que a cada uno le corresponde. La *pictura* de este emblema desempeña un importante papel ya que tanto realiza una advertencia como muestra las consecuencias de no seguir ese consejo. Su utilización como elemento disuasorio nos parece de la mayor importancia por tratarse

de una época en la que no se había constituido aún un ejército regular ni se había fijado de forma estable los aparatos de represión del Estado. Mediante los cambios que intentan llevar a cabo los personajes que nombra Reusner se puede aludir a ese deseo de ascenso social que preocupaba tanto a los dirigentes políticos y religiosos del Barroco. En el caso de Marsias se trataría del individuo que se enfrenta al superior en una sociedad absolutista. El papel de Apolo es por tanto el del poderoso. Petrus Berchorius, uno de los intérpretes medievales de las *Metamorfosis* de Ovidio, ya analizó el enfrentamiento entre Apolo y Marsias en este sentido al considerar que representaban respectivamente a un hombre poderoso y a un individuo corriente con ansias de medrar (Wyss 1996: p. 46).

La actitud de conformismo que domina en el epigrama de Reusner es bastante frecuente. Juan de Borja, en el emblema que tiene como mote "Celsa Graviore Casu Decidunt", afirma que "lo más seguro y mejor sería contentarse cada uno con el estado con el que nació" (1680: pp. 190–191) y Hernando de Soto aconseja dentro de sus *Emblemas Moralizadas* que "...el necesitado y pobre padezca en este valle de miserias y desventuras, llevelo con paciencia, y sealo de espiritu, que no le està prometido, en recompensa dello, menos que el Reyno de los cielos" (1983: fol. 15).

Muy vinculado al emblema de Reusner está uno de los que Jean Mercier o Joannes Mercerius (1544–1600) incluyó en su tratado *Emblemata*. Compuesto por un total de cincuenta emblemas formados por una *pictura*, un mote y un epigrama latino, la edición príncipe de la obra, la publicada en 1592, no incluye ningún dato relativo a la impresión del tratado, quizá debido a que, como señala Landwehr, la obra fue "privately printed". En cualquier caso, la ciudad en la que el tratado fue publicado es Bourges, lugar en el que Mercerius ejerció como alcalde durante un corto periodo de tiempo (Landwehr 1976: 138).

El mote del emblema, "Diffusum toto corpore vulnus habet. Sequitur sua poena superbos" [Tiene una herida extendida a lo largo de todo su cuerpo. Es el castigo que merecen los soberbios], aparece dividido en dos partes atendiendo a sus características gramaticales y rodeando un grabado en el que se reproduce el momento en el que se está llevando a cabo la tortura del sátiro. El mote se presenta por

tanto como una acertada síntesis de lo que se puede ver en la imagen y, como se verá a continuación, de lo que dice el epigrama que está dispuesto en la página siguiente (1592: fol. 9).

El grabado resulta especialmente interesante por distintas razones. En él se plasma el momento en el que comienza la tortura y se empieza a despellejar al vencido, al que previamente se había atado al tronco de un árbol. Sin embargo, las características físicas con las que se presentan los dos personajes difieren mucho de la que es la habitual, la anteriormente analizada de Reusner. Marsias no tiene el aspecto de un sátiro semianimal con cuernos o patas de macho cabrío, sino que por el contrario, tanto su cabello, la elegante colocación de su cuerpo bien proporcionado o su vestimenta, revelan una condición mucho más elevada que la del extraño ser del que hablan las fuentes. También resulta inusual el aspecto de quien se supone es el dios Apolo, especialmente la corta estatura que le obliga a subir a un tronco de árbol para poder despellejar al sátiro.

Menos sorpresas ofrece el epigrama. Recuerda en los cuatro primeros versos cómo Marsias osó enfrentarse a la dulzura de la lira del dios Apolo con su "tibia rauca" [cavernosa tibia][9], poniendo como garantía su propia piel, o cómo fueron las Musas las que dictaminaron la victoria final del dios. Es en los dos versos finales del poema en donde Mercerius, pasando de lo general a lo particular, advierte acerca del fin que les espera a aquéllos que, a pesar de estar menos preparados, no dudan en compararse con los mejores[10].

Consideramos que los cambios introducidos en la fisonomía de los protagonistas del relato y que son plasmados en la *pictura* del emblema están directamente relacionados con el mensaje que Mercerius pretende transmitir. De la forma más obvia posible se

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[9] Era el material con el que se construían los instrumentos el que en ocasiones determinaba su denominación; en este caso, y como se puede deducir, la materia prima en la elaboración del instrumento de Marsias era el hueso de un animal (Bragard y de Hen 1973: 26).

[10] Agnoscis tandem nimis audaz Martia, quantum
Cedat dulcisonae tibia rauca lyrae:
Et quo tu insipiens certasti pignore, musis
Judicibus pellem victor Apollo referi.
O vtinam qui se stulti sapientibus aequant,
Exemplo possint velle pudere tuo" (1592: fol. 9).

quiere advertir a los hombres que se comparan o se enfrentan a otros situados por encima de ellos, del peligro que corren con su actuación. Para ello el autor no sólo ha recurrido al relato de Marsias, sino que también parece haber modificado el aspecto de los contendientes. En lugar de presentar a Marsias como a un sátiro y a un ser irreal, lo ha provisto de la apariencia de un individuo de aspecto distinguido. No sólo no profiere lamentos, sino que su postura relajada parece situarlo por encima del sufrimiento. Por el contrario, la figura del dios, subido encima del tronco de un árbol y enfrascado en la carnicería, resulta incluso cómica. Mediante su aspecto extremadamente frágil e infantil, Mercerius puede querer advertir que, aunque la victoria parezca en ocasiones especialmente fácil, el desenlace puede resultar inesperado. La apariencia del dios hace que resulten adecuadas las palabras que Saavedra Fajardo incluye en una de sus *Empresas Políticas*, cuando recordaba al Príncipe que "si bien le diferencia el ceptro de los súbditos, le exceden muchos en las calidades del ánimo, más nobles que su grandeza" (1999: 513). Aunque Marsias parece encarnar esa superioridad en el súbdito a la que alude Saavedra, su actitud es injustificable y por ello merece ser, y es, castigada.

El emblemista español Juan de Horozco y Covarrubias (1539–1613), también utilizó el relato de Apolo y Marsias en sus *Emblemas Morales*. Quien fuera teólogo y obispo de Guadix y Surgento, fue el autor del primer libro de emblemas producido en España, obra que fue publicada en Segovia en 1589. No sólo se trata de un cuidado tratado de emblemas en el que, como apunta Gállego, el texto goza de bastante calidad literaria, sino que además el primero de los libros que componen la obra está dedicado a la teoría del emblema, siendo una de los pocas elaboradas por autores españoles que tratan de estas cuestiones (1991: 91).

Dispuesto en una filacteria dentro de la imagen, el mote del emblema tripartito en el que se representa el enfrentamiento entre Apolo y Marsias, adopta la forma de una advertencia, "Cum diis non contendendum" [No se contienda con los dioses] (1589: fol. 83–85). El momento del relato que se plasma en la *pictura* es el posterior al combate musical, cuando el músico Marsias ya ha sido despellejado por el dios y su cuerpo ha sido abandonado a su suerte. La extraña

colocación de los distintos elementos en el paraje desértico e inhabitado en el que se representa la escena, hace suponer que todos, o casi todos, requieren una lectura simbólica. Marsias está atado al tronco de un árbol seco, de tan sólo dos ramas, de las que cuelgan, a modo de trofeo, una piel y una flauta de Pan formada por tres cañas.

Bajo el grabado está colocado un epigrama escrito en castellano formado por ocho versos. El poema se limita a narrar los datos más sobresalientes del relato, a saber: cómo de forma temeraria el sátiro osó enfrentarse al dios Apolo y cómo éste, tras desollarlo, "a un tro[n]co atado/ le dexa a contemplar su desvario"; es en los dos últimos versos donde se vuelve a referir al mote latino, realizando una adaptación poética al castellano, "(m)ostrando quan costosa es la imprudencia/ de querer con los Dioses competencia"[11]. En el comentario colocado a continuación Horozco comienza refiriéndose a algunas de las más importantes versiones del relato; así cita las procedentes de Pausanias, Estrabón, Plinio o Heródoto, y tampoco olvida el relato de Ovidio, a quien no cita directamente pero menciona a través de una de las notas escritas al margen. Los datos que ofrece se centran en los detalles referentes a la tortura, a saber: el árbol en el que fue atado Marsias, el que se formara un río con las lágrimas de las Musas o el que se fabricara un odre con la piel arrancada. Los calificativos que destina al sátiro o a su actitud repiten lo destacado en el mote; afirma que "en pago de su atrevimiento fue desollado" o se refiere a Marsias como a "quien con el viento de la vanidad se avia atrevido a competir con quien no devia" (1589: fol. 84).

La enseñanza que se debe extraer de la historia es mencionada prácticamente desde el mismo comienzo del comentario. Es el "castigo que merece quien con sus mayores, y co[n] los que son mas poderosos quiere tener competencia" (1589: fol. 84). Ilustra esta

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[11] El atrevido Marsias confiado
en su tañer, propuso desafio
al Dios Apolo, y este començado
a Marsias se acabò su fuerça y brio,
y el dios le desollo, y a un tro[n]co atado
le dexa a contemplar su desvario,
Mostrado quan costosa es la imprudencia
de querer con los Dioses competencia.

enseñanza con citas procedentes de distintas autoridades que resultan muy similares en el contenido, a saber: unas palabras de Séneca que encierran una clara advertencia al lector, "contender con el ygual (...) es peligroso negocio, con el inferior es baxeza, y con el superior es temeridad"; otras procedentes de Hesiodo, "(e)l que quiere contienda co[n] los que son mas aventajados que el es imprudente, porq le faltarà la vitoria y sobre el dolor que te[n]dra se le seguira deshonor y afrenta"; o de Demócrito, "toda contencion era falta de prudencia" (1589: fol. 84).

Al igual que gran parte de los tratadistas de su época, Horozco busca fervientemente en este emblema una correspondencia entre la historia pagana y la sagrada, es decir, intenta encontrar similitudes o una cierta reconciliación entre la historia bíblica y la historia mitológica. Sabedor de que utilizaba un ejemplo tomado de la mitología en una época y en un ambiente dominado por la Contrarreforma, Horozco realiza en la parte final de su comentario referencias que nos parecen no ya originales, por no haberlas encontrado en otros autores, sino realmente interesantes. Intentando justificar que en las fuentes antiguas se calificara a Apolo como a un dios, se remonta a la *Biblia* (*Génesis* 2, 9) y a la denominación con la que el dios cristiano aparece en ella y afirma: "(l)lamanse los Principes Dioses por el oficio que tiene[n], y asi la Escritura los llama por el nombre de Heloin, que es el de Dios, en quanto Principe y gobernador y universal juez de todos" (1589: fol. 85). Con esta aclaración hace que cobre un nuevo sentido el mote del emblema, ya que no se trataría de "Dioses" sino de príncipes. El mensaje del epigrama sería por tanto el de no enfrentarse con los gobernantes y con los poderosos, algo a lo que, como hemos señalado más arriba, ya había aludido el autor repetidamente mediante distintas citas en el comentario.

Por lo que respecta al grabado debemos mencionar en primer lugar la extraña apariencia de la piel que cuelga del árbol y que la hace parecer más el despojo de un animal con cuatro patas. Esta exposición de la piel del sátiro tras el desollamiento forma parte de una cruda popularización de las versiones más antiguas del relato. Heródoto afirmaba que ésta se colocó en la plaza de la ciudad frigia de Kelainai (Celanas), mientras que Xenophon la situaba en la caverna en la que,

según una de las versiones, nació el río *Marsias*. En una de las versiones realizadas de la obra de Ovidio, y publicada como *Ovidio metamorphoseos volgare* (Venecia, 1501), la piel del sátiro era colocada dentro del templo de Apolo (Winternitz 1979: 160).

El mote del emblema ya había sido utilizado con anterioridad vinculado a la muerte de Marsias. Nos referimos a una medalla italiana que, perteneciente a Ottavio Farnese, segundo duque de Parma, fue realizada por Giovanni Federico Boanzagni entre 1556 y 1586. En la medalla se reproduce el busto del duque vestido con armadura en el anverso, mientras que en el reverso puede leerse el mote "Cum diis non contendendum" acompañando la representación del relato del enfrentamiento entre Apolo y Marsias. En el análisis que Edith Wyss realiza de esta medalla, vincula el mote a la situación política y apunta la posibilidad de que encerrara una clara advertencia contra la insubordinación en el ducado de Parma (1996: 125–6).

Creemos que el emblema de Juan de Horozco, al igual que la mencionada medalla de Ottavio Farnese, encierra una advertencia política. Se trataría de un discurso de poder encaminado a advertir de los peligros que conlleva enfrentarse a los individuos situados en un nivel superior. La victoria de Apolo, representante de la armonía cósmica, significaría, desde esta perspectiva política, acabar con los desórdenes y con las rebeliones que representa el sátiro quien, con su tortura, simbolizaría el fin de las hostilidades y la vuelta a la concordia[12]. Es por ello por lo que, en nuestra opinión, la muerte de Marsias se reviste en el grabado del simbolismo propio de un rito de purificación. La presencia del árbol podado y su tradicional vinculación con la idea de sacrificio[13], la forma de la piel del sátiro y

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[12] Como afirmara, entre otros, el neoplatónico Proclo, la variedad y multiplicidad de sonidos que se podían conseguir con el instrumento que se asociaba a Marsias, el aulós, era contraria a las ideas de orden y armonía (Markea y Terezis 2004: 30–31).; ya Aristóteles en la *Política* había calificado al aulós como un instrumento más pasional que moral (1991: VIII 1341a).

[13] Creemos que el significado que le otorga Horozco proviene de la *Biblia* y de la imagen de la poda que se encuentra en el *Evangelio de san Juan*, "(t)odo sarmiento que en mí no da fruto, lo corta, y todo el que da fruto, lo limpia, para que dé más fruto" (15 2). Una interpretación similar del árbol podado se encuentra en la empresa de Núñez Cepeda "Proficit injuria" (1988: 100), en

el hecho de que esté representado como un hombre nuevo tras librarse de ella (distinto por completo a su apariencia anterior)[14] simbolizarían no sólo su derrota sino también el triunfo que ella conlleva. El mismo Marsias, al despojarse de sus atributos (su piel de sátiro y el instrumento musical), los que ocasionaban la discordia por ser los elementos principales en el enfrentamiento, simboliza el triunfo de la armonía que representa Apolo. El emblema enlazaría de esta forma con la interpretación del enfrentamiento que se realizara desde la corriente neoplatónica. El significado con el que Horozco dota el emblema partiría de la metáfora que se encuentra en el *Banquete* de Platón y que tanta importancia adquiriera en la corriente humanista. En un diálogo en el que intervenían Sócrates y Alcibíades, se vinculaba el primero de ellos a Marsias diciendo que tanto el filósofo como el sátiro escondían tesoros ocultos y se afirmaba que la sabiduría y la virtud se encuentran en el interior de las cosas (1972: 215c-d). En el mismo sentido, como señalara el tratadista del Renacimiento Juan Pérez de Moya en su obra *Philosophia Secreta*, "(l)a sabiduría se saca de lugares ocultos" (1996: 664).

Recapitulando lo ya expuesto y según la interpretación que hemos realizado, con la muerte de Marsias no sólo se castiga al temerario que se extralimita sino que gracias a la purificación que significa su tortura y al hecho de que se le despoje de sus atributos, estrechamente vinculados a lo terrenal, se origina la armonía y la concordia. Esta interpretación retomaría en parte el significado que se le atribuía a los instrumentos que intervenían en el enfrentamiento. Frente al carácter eminentemente pasional del aulós (representado en este emblema por la flauta de Pan) se colocará la templanza, la armonía, el equilibrio y, por tanto, la concordia que representa la lira del dios Apolo.

Juan Francisco Villava, "Ex damno uberior" (1613: I XXIV), en Sebastián Covarrubias, en "Ab ipso ducit opes animun(que)" (1610: I 32) o en "Sic uberius" de Juan de Borja (1680: 128–129).

[14] El aspecto de Marsias tras la tortura recuerda los rituales en los que se produce una "modificación radical de la condición religiosa y social del sujeto", en palabras de Mircea Eliade. Tras participar en estos ritos y a consecuencia de la muerte ritual y posterior resurrección como una persona nueva, el individuo se transformaba en otro distinto (Eliade 1989: 10, 13).

La utilización que se realiza del relato del enfrentamiento entre Apolo y Marsias en los emblemas analizados se debe tan sólo a la presencia de la actitud temeraria por parte de su protagonista. El significado que se le otorga al sátiro no está vinculado a su condición de músico o al tipo de instrumento que tocaba sino tan sólo al hecho de que osara desafiar a un dios. De entre los numerosos significados e interpretaciones que se podían realizar, la elegida de forma prioritaria desde la emblemática no tiene en cuenta el tradicional antagonismo entre los dos tipos de instrumentos, la citarodia vinculada a Apolo y la aulética a Marsias, o entre las actitudes de los contendientes sino que, en su lugar, interpreta la tortura del sátiro como un discurso de poder destinado a mantener las estructuras sociales vigentes y/o a advertir de forma clara sobre las consecuencias de no seguir las normas establecidas.

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